Encounter

edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

MAY 1959. VOL. XII. NO. 5

Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1
3s. per number (USA and Canada 75c.) Postage per copy: Inland 6d., Foreign 4½d.
Yearly subscription (including postage) £2: USA and Canada $7.50: India 12 rupees
US and Canadian subscriptions may be entered at British Publications Inc.
30 East 60th Street New York 22. Second class mail privileges
authorised at New York, N.Y.

TROUBLE IN THE AIR	3	*Peregrine Worsthorne*
A TALK WITH VINOBA BHAVE	14	*Sidney Hook*
SITTING ON A FORTUNE	19	*Wayland Young*
SHOWER (A STORY)	32	*Hwang Soon Won*
PERISH BY THE SWORD	37	*Simon Raven*
NOTES AND TOPICS		
APOLOGY FOR POEZZY	50	*Frank Kermode*
ON TRANSLATING "ZHIVAGO"	51	*Manya Harari*
ENDING THE MUSICAL TRADITION?	53	*Frank Howes, Peter Heyworth*
POKER ON THE RHINE	57	*Kenneth Younger*
A SECOND HOLLAND IS NOT ENOUGH	59	*J. A. Lukacs*
BOOKS AND WRITERS		
A HOUSECARL IN LOYOLA'S MENIE	63	*Hilary Corke*
PORTRAIT OF JOYCE AS FRIEND	67	*Philip Toynbee*
WHOSE ACCENT?	68	*Max Hartwell*
CARMEN TO COTTARD	71	*Anthony Powell*
A GERMAN TRAGEDY	73	*Constantine FitzGibbon*
AFRICAN VOICES	76	*Colin MacInnes*
STALIN'S SLOGAN	77	*George Lichtheim*
THE MONOTONY OF LOVE	79	*Isabel Quigly*
FROM THE OTHER SHORE	81	
LETTERS	83	
AUTHORS	88	

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Peregrine Worsthorne

Trouble in the Air

Letter from Ghana

THIS country was certainly the very model candidate for independence. Compared to other backward countries it is staggeringly well-off. So long as Europe and America retain their sweet tooths the cocoa bean will go on fructifying Ghana's economy without much effort or organisation; by Asian standards, therefore, no Ghanaian is poor. Nor need they go hungry. The soil is generous and fruitful. Anybody prepared to chop down a coconut or dig up a yam can at least fill his belly. If you go to a political meeting most of the audience will be sucking mangoes or chewing bananas. More important, Ghanaians have for centuries practised a form of local democracy. If the Chiefs did not conform to local customs or governed without due regard to their subjects' will, they could be—and frequently were de-stooled. The basic concept of Government by consent was deeply engrained long before the British arrived. It is easy to see, therefore, why it was thought safe to put this free Ghana within the delicate framework of parliamentary democracy. It was a very gentle, placid bull we put in the china shop. Yet, two years later, the shop has been reduced to a shambles, with its prize pieces—rule of law, freedom of the opposition, two-party Government, habeas corpus—lying shattered and trodden underfoot.

We have asked Mr. Worsthorne, who recently returned from Accra, to record his personal impressions and criticisms of "emerging statehood," and in our next number we are publishing a symposium of differing views of Africa's problems and "the errors of colonial policy."

Who is to blame? It is easy, of course, to blame Dr. Nkrumah. But this is as foolish and unjust as to blame the bull. Any African leader would have done just the same. The china was bound to get smashed.

Before granting independence the British (to change the image) dressed up Ghana's infant body politic in a political uniform which was so vastly too large that any movement at all involved contortions bound to be both ridiculous and destructive. The heavy folds of parliamentarianism could only smother what they were designed to protect. The truth is that whereas Ghanaians were quite capable of defending their primitive liberties under the kind of limited autocracy to which they were accustomed, they have proved quite incapable of defending the grandiose liberties provided by a parliamentary democracy. Conversely, whereas Dr. Nkrumah would not have found it at all easy to ride roughshod over the kind of unwritten, subterranean power limitations that exist in an ancient autocracy, he has found nothing easier than to ignore the new modern constitutional checks.

In a country like Ghana no political system could be more likely to strengthen those in power and weaken those in opposition than the British model. The only obstacle, at any rate in theory, which democracy erects against abuse of power is the electorate's right to eject an unpopular government at the next election. Every natural limitation on governmental action is subordinated to this major sanction. For if sovereignty is derived from the people, a popularly elected government must remain sovereign until it is replaced by its successor. Any attempt to limit its power while in office would contradict the basic assumption on which democratic

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

theory rests: namely, the absolute sovereignty of the popular will. In theory, majority rule is the most tyrannical form of government conceivable —absolutism tempered only by impermanence. In practice, of course, the Government's knowledge that if it misuses its power the opposition will win the next election acts as an incomparably efficient brake. But if this brake does not operate then a democratic state apparatus is likely to get out of hand quicker and more completely than any other machinery of government. In Ghana this particular brake does not exist, except in theory. But because in theory it does exist, all the subordinate limitations on power which non-democratic societies tend to develop have been allowed to disintegrate.

WHY am I so dogmatic that Ghana's Parliamentary Opposition has no chance of winning an election? Dr. Busia, its scholarly leader, attributes his impotence to "governmental intimidation and bribery." If Dr. Nkrumah and his colleagues were true democrats, he argues, and did not try to suppress the Opposition, it would stand a good chance of eventual victory. It is, of course, perfectly true that Dr. Nkrumah does deport, imprison, and intimidate his opponents; does use bribery and corruption to strengthen his C.P.P.; does, in short, break more china than is absolutely necessary. A more scrupulous individual might have behaved better. But this is not the point. The point is that the parliamentary opposition is impotent not only because of what Dr. Nkrumah *does* but also because of what Ghana *is*. Whoever had been first African Prime Minister of Ghana, a new country without any cohesion or natural loyalty to the State, would have been forced to build himself up into a demi-God, and to root out those elements which sought to cut him down to parliamentary size. The possibility of voluntarily creating a new State out of conflicting tribes with no common interest in the present, or tradition of co-operation in the past (except for the single objective of getting the British out), without a common culture or language, and with basic economic rivalries between region and region, was a colonial-office pipe-dream which could never have worked.

The first essential, after British withdrawal, was to persuade the various regions to accept the authority of the Central Government in Accra. The great disadvantage of democracy in such circumstances is that it has no principle which can persuade disparate peoples to combine. England and Scotland, for example, would never have merged under a system of universal suffrage. Nothing short of hereditary monarchy was sufficient to solve that problem. It is strange that the British, whose empire is rapidly being broken up by the principle of self-determination, should have at one and the same time bequeathed to Dr. Nkrumah the task of creating a new State and the handicap of democratic principles. If he was to succeed in the task he could hardly fail to jettison the handicap. Left to a free vote, neither Ashanti nor the Northern Territories would have chosen to be governed from a capital situated amongst their hereditary enemies. Separatist impulses were temporarily subordinated to the overriding aim of getting rid of the British. But once this aim had been realised, they soon broke out again with widespread violence.

It is not surprising, therefore, that during the first two years of independence Dr. Nkrumah should have sought to build himself up into an uncrowned monarch, or that he should have adopted practices which make a mockery of parliamentary government. Since the British had long propagated the thesis that black men were incapable of exercising authority (and had gone a long way towards proving this thesis by undermining—at least unintentionally—the only authority, that of the chiefs, which did exist), Ghana's first all-black government had to assert itself in ways which would catch the ordinary African's imagination. That is why, of course, Dr. Nkrumah moved into the Governor-General's castle, replaced the Queen's head with his own Ghana stamps and coins, and initiated a campaign of personal aggrandisement which is so out of keeping with a parliamentary democracy. The only way to convince the people that the British had gone for good was to invest their successor with all the trappings of permanent sovereignty. But the essence of a parliamentary system is the *impermanence* of the government "of the day." Only by creating an image of itself as an alternative government can the Opposition fulfil its parliamentary function. Yet if the Ghana Opposition had succeeded in creating this image, it would have weakened not only the Government Party, but the State itself. For Dr. Nkrumah is the State. As its founding father and pre-eminent symbol his prestige far transcends that of a mere party leader. In a real sense, therefore, the Opposition, in fulfilling its constitutional rôle, is acting against the State.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How could it be otherwise? Most of the Opposition leaders are men who struggled hard for a Federal Constitution which, if adopted, would have prevented the State of Ghana from ever materialising in its present form. To expect a loyal Ghanaian Opposition is, therefore, absurd. Loyal to what? Being loyal to the State would in effect mean being loyal to Dr. Nkrumah, which would be a contradiction in terms. Loyalty to the White Queen, whose sovereignty the Government is determined to renounce, makes no sense at all. Ghana is too young a country to have invested patriotism with any meaning equally relevant to all sections of the people. All the instincts of loyalty which buttress the State in long-established countries tend in Ghana to have the opposite effect. If a man takes a pride in his ancestors, or feels strongly the pull of the past, he will be strengthened in his loyalty to his tribes, or his family, or his village—but not to the State. The more subject a Ghanaian is to those emotions which, in Britain, turn a man into a chauvinistic blimp, the more he will see the State as the principal enemy of his sacred traditions. The Opposition, therefore, in setting itself up as the focus for all those dissatisfied with the Government could scarcely avoid, however honourable its motives, becoming a potentially subversive movement. It does not wish to change only the Government, but to create a wholly different kind of State. Its leaders are acutely conscious that universal suffrage places a premium on demagoguery; that a one-chamber legislature cannot act as an effective brake on executive tyranny; that some form of African aristocracy is a far more relevant social system than democracy for Ghana's present needs. Sensible as these views certainly are, the fact remains that, given the kind of State Ghana actually is to-day, their implementation would involve radical changes.

In judging, therefore, the relationship between Dr. Nkrumah and the Opposition, it is necessary to bear in mind that although the outward form is parliamentary, the inner meaning is revolutionary. This sounds more dramatic than it actually is. In a country as young as Ghana, evolution and revolution are not altogether dissimilar processes. Although in European terminology Dr. Nkrumah is a "radical conservative" and Dr. Busia a "conservative revolutionary," such terms are strictly meaningless in a country where so little exists either to defend or undermine. This explains the extraordinary contrast between the friendly personal atmosphere in which Ghana politics are conducted and the violent language. Recently one of the Opposition leaders was charged with "sedition," "treason," and all sorts of "crimes against the State." Yet I watched him being greeted when he entered the House of Commons with friendly cheers from the Government benches. The Chief Whip crossed the floor to shake him by the hand.

Neither those in power nor those out of power in Ghana feel as deeply about the State as do peoples who have built up over the centuries a kind of religious reverence to their political institutions. To our eyes, therefore, Ghana's political struggle seems strangely theatrical, as if both sides were fighting each other on the stage while best of friends in real life. But this ambivalent appearance should not disguise the very real struggle that does exist. Although the allegedly treasonable Opposition leader was greeted with genuine friendship by members of the Government, they have nevertheless locked him up. And although the Opposition deny strongly that they ever contemplate violence, there is very little doubt that plots to assassinate Nkrumah do exist. The situation is such that almost against their individual wills the politicians on each side are being forced into extremism.

THE Government needs to be strong. This is a basic requirement in a new State. Yet since the new State is a parliamentary system the Opposition cannot function unless it can present itself as an alternative government. There is, therefore, a genuine clash between the national interest and the principles on which the national political system is meant to be built. This dilemma is not limited to Ghana. It is present in all the newly-developed countries. In Pakistan it has been resolved by overthrowing the parliamentary system root and branch. The solution in Ghana, however, strikes me as very much more dangerous. Instead of destroying the system, Dr. Nkrumah has decided to emasculate its spirit while preserving its forms. He allows the Opposition to continue in existence, but only in circumstances which make it impossible for it to fulfil its function.

It is virtually impossible to-day for the Opposition to win an election. The Government Party enjoys such immense powers of patronage that it can assure itself support at all levels. If a village does not vote for the C.P.P. it will receive no subsidies. One can tell how an area is ex-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pected to vote at the next election or how it voted at the last by whether it boasts a new school or welfare centre. Again, because the Government service offers the only attractive employment for any ambitious Ghanaian, loyalty to the C.P.P. is the only way of assuring advancement. In a country where private industry scarcely exists, everybody who is anybody works in some way or other for the Government. The Opposition's task is further complicated by the total absence of any informed public opinion which can be appealed to on a basis of reason. It is virtually impossible to discuss issues on their merits. Unable to offer "bread and circuses," and denied an intelligent public opinion susceptible to argued persuasion, the Opposition is inevitably forced back on violence—which in turn both provokes and excuses the Government's retaliation in kind.

Nobody with any sense of history should find this at all surprising. It only surprises the British because they took their own imperial propaganda seriously. Unwilling to admit that they were withdrawing from the Gold Coast because they were not prepared to make the necessary effort to stay, they pretended they were withdrawing because the Africans were ripe for parliamentary self-government. Each new piece of evidence that this face-saving assumption was utterly unfounded comes, therefore, as painfully embarrassing. But if we ignore British imperial *amour propre* it is easy enough to admit that those who inherited power in Ghana had little alternative but to subordinate individual liberties to the corporate task of forging a new nation. The choice facing the Ghanaians was not (and is not to-day) "between democracy and dictatorship," but between Statehood and disintegration. Dr. Nkrumah sees himself as doing to Ghana what Richelieu did to France in the 17th century: forging a cohesive nation strong enough, at a later date, to survive the strains of revolution.

This comforting parallel, however, is vitiated by one striking difference in the two situations. France evolved into a democracy by way of monarchy and dictatorship. Ghana, however, is evolving into dictatorship by way of parliamentary government. Having, so to speak, started from the top, and descended to the bottom, it may prove far more difficult to make the ascent a second time. What is shocking and alarming about Ghana is that the necessary growing pains are taking place in a nation whose outward forms are already fully grown. While a young body politic is expecting to behave wildly, and to kick and scream, it is difficult to make the same allowances when instead of being swathed in the swaddling clothes of autocracy it is dressed up in the venerable uniform of a mature democracy. More important, by tripping over and tearing this incongruous adult uniform in childhood, it will have been reduced to shreds and tatters by the time Ghana might with luck have been ready to wear it. In other words, by the time Ghana is ready for democracy, the institutions of parliamentary government will have been damaged and discredited beyond repair.

THAT the British should have made this inevitable seems to me a monstrous folly. It was virtually certain that if we granted Ghana independence, the first Prime Minister would destroy the powers of the chiefs, muzzle the Opposition, exploit the principal of majority rule to govern by decree, bribe the electors, and aggrandise himself. Yet knowing this we self-righteously erected a parliamentary system whose only consequence so far has been to transform certain inevitably autocratic processes of growth into the stigma of democratic decay. We made it impossible for Dr. Nkrumah to reduce the power of the chiefs, that is, to destroy Ghana's feudal order, without at the same time reducing the power of parliament; we made it impossible for him to impose unity or to create a visible symbol of African sovereignty, without flouting democratic liberties. By legitimising an opposition we made it certain that it was destroyed; by bequeathing all the paraphernalia of Parliament, we made it certain that it would be mocked. To implicate democracy in the dirty work that inevitably goes with creating a new nation made the work no cleaner; it merely made democracy dirty.

The Government has been given a bad name for doing what was inevitable, which leads them to feel that in future they might as well be hung for a sheep as a goat; and the Opposition, encouraged to knock their heads against a brick wall, have relapsed into bitter and potentially violent frustration. As a result, a period which should have been known as the birth of a nation has become instead the death of democracy. Britain's great good fortune was to develop the theory of democracy and the conditions which make its institutions possible at roughly the same time. Ghana had the theory and the institutions thrust upon it—but not the conditions. There is, therefore, a serious danger that if, and when, the conditions do evolve, nobody in

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ghana will any longer believe in the theory.

This may prove too pessimistic a view. Dr. Nkrumah is clearing away the machinery of democracy so fast that it may not have time to rust before it has all disappeared. If we are realistic, therefore, we should welcome each new assault on the disastrous legacy we left behind. Nothing could be worse than to have the democratic institutions continuing to function badly. Would it not be far better if Dr. Nkrumah did away with Parliament altogether, than successfully to adapt it to basically undemocratic purposes? Would it not be wiser for the Opposition to boycott the debates, and to give up fighting elections which it cannot hope to win?

DOES this mean that Ghanaians should resign themselves to one-man rule, leaving it to fate to work out a freer system of government in God's good time?

Quite the contrary. At the moment a parliamentary system endangers rather than protects Ghanaian freedom. Its grandiose design encourages those young shoots of freedom which do exist. The point is really very simple. So long as these elements in Ghana who wish to modify Dr. Nkrumah's power concentrate on exercising influence through Parliament, they will remain impotent. As I have said, a Parliamentary Opposition can have no function. But the subterranean opportunities for influence in a country like Ghana are immense. While it is impracticable to influence the Government by opposing it from outside, it is by no means impossible to influence policy from within the ruling party.

To some extent this is already happening. There are already different groups within the Cabinet. Mr. Gbedemah, the moderate Minister of Finance, acts as a far more effective brake on Dr. Nkrumah than does the Leader of the Opposition. What debate there is takes place in the Cabinet rather than in Parliament. This is also true on a national scale. The C.P.P. contains men of widely differing views. I talked to one C.P.P. representative, who made no effort to hide his disagreements with Dr. Nkrumah. The surface picture of Dr. Nkrumah destroying all opposition in Ghana is very misleading. He has destroyed *the* Opposition, but has made no effort to destroy opposition; he has put an end to Parliamentary debate, but not to debate. It may well be that he would like to build himself up into a dictator. But the conditions for dictatorship do not exist. The powers of government are sufficient to prevent an alternative party from winning an election. But the general level of incompetence, inefficiency, and happy casualness makes dictatorship a practical impossibility. Left to develop its own institutions, therefore, I do not doubt that Ghana would evolve its own methods of representative government; its own limitations on arbitrary use of power. But, first of all, must they not get rid of "the British legacy of parliamentary government"?

TO URGE such a course raises the question whether the presence of so many senior British officials in the Ghana administration is doing more harm than good.

The ostensible reason for them staying on after independence was to "help make democracy work" during the initial period of independence. They have singularly failed in this endeavour. But the fact that they are prepared to stay on serves to "whitewash" this failure, thereby delaying the evolution of new and more congruous institutions. Their presence acts as a smokescreen which, because it covers up existing abuses, weakens the impulse to remedy them. Nobody, for example, believes that the civil service can really be corrupt so long as British officials are happy to grace its ranks; or that the police can be a political tool so long as British officers fill its key posts; or that the army can be planning militaristic adventures so long as its commander-in-chief is an ex-Rifle Brigade major-general, or that Dr. Nkrumah can really be a dictator so long as he can boast among his intimates such well-known English Liberals as Barbara Ward. The truth is, however, that far from acting as a restraining influence, the presence of these British partners has precisely the opposite effect. It is an immense advantage for Dr. Nkrumah to have loyal British officials in key positions throughout the army, the civil service, and the police. As a result he can feel confident that these instruments of State will not be turned against him. This in turn enables the Government to take risks which it would never feel free to do if potentially unreliable Africans held the key posts. The British presence, in short, introduces an unnatural element of stability which makes it possible for the Government to be far more blatantly authoritarian than it would otherwise dare to be. The civil service and military habit of unquestioning obedience to the Government of the day—which is so

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

estimable a tradition in Britain because Ministers are reluctant to abuse it—becomes a menace in a country like Ghana where politicians exercise no self-restraint. Instead of facilitating good government, it promotes bad. For in primitive communities the only two genuine means of limiting abuse of power are fear among those on top that those underneath will refuse to obey them, and sheer inefficiency in the business of getting dictatorial instructions carried out. The British presence, without in any way strengthening parliamentary democracy, simply serves to remove these two natural brakes. It provides Dr. Nkrumah with an efficient police, army, and civil service, with which to impose his will.

As one member of the Cabinet put it to me: "You British really are an extraordinary race! When you ruled us we thought you were sticklers for principle. Now we rule you and you are prepared to do anything we tell you...."

I hasten to add that motives of personal gain probably play only a marginal part in persuading British officials to swallow their scruples. Men who had given their lives to service in Africa naturally wanted to remain. They genuinely wanted to be of service. Now that they are beginning to see what "being of service" involves many are preparing to resign.

"The great mistake we made," one of them said to me, "was to assume that by staying on we would help to strengthen an indigenous African civil service. In fact, our presence gravely weakens the possibility of this development.... So long as whites remain in senior civil service posts African officials under them will feel forced to give their primary loyalty to the black politicians. Colour solidarity is far more real than institutional solidarity. This means that the younger generation of African civil servants are developing habits which will prevent a self-respecting civil service structure from ever developing. But if there were black men running the departments at the top they would be able to demand and be likely to receive the loyalty of their juniors, which in time would lead to a healthy tension between the politician and the civil service....

"It might mean that the standards of efficiency would decline, since the number of Africans trained for senior posts is grossly inadequate. But this would be a worthwhile price to pay for the development of a civil service élite which took a jealous pride in its own hierarchy....

"What is needed are new centres of power other than the Government. So long as the only *all-black* instrument of State is the executive, it will enjoy an unrivalled supremacy. So long as the judiciary, the civil service, and the army, and even public opinion are dominated by whites, they can never compete.... There can be little doubt that the longer whites remain associated with all aspects of the body politic except the Government itself, the more difficult it will be to evolve any balance of power within the State...."

THE truth is that the idea of Britain staying on in Ghana after independence, assisting the new body politic to find its feet, was based on a gross miscalculation about the kind of Africans who would be in charge of the new State.

The British assumed that the new masters of Ghana would be the Western-educated élite who had been sent to Balliol, with whom talk of partnership might have made real sense. It was, of course, precisely this type of African who did best under colonial rule, reaching senior posts in the judiciary and civil service. But the type which reaches the top under colonial rule is very different from the type which reaches the top under independence. Universal suffrage puts a premium on the gift of demagogy, just as colonial rule favoured Africans with a Balliol accent. The men, therefore, who have actually inherited power in Ghana are not the African élite on whom all our plans for partnership had really been based. What kind of partnership is possible with a Krobo Edusei? Most emphatically this was not the kind of man whom Lord Lugard had in mind as the ultimate heirs to British Africa.

Take, for example, the presence of a British officer in command of the Ghana army. This, of course, is in line with the British idea of "partnership." We want to see Ghana build up an efficient, loyal, armed force. As the former colonial power, we take a benevolent interest in Ghana's well-being. We feel intimately concerned with her future, almost as if she were still part of us. This benevolent, avuncular attitude is highly laudable. But it is also wilfully blind, for British officers are helping to build up a Ghanaian army which may well be used for other purposes. Major-General G. V. Paley, its C.-in-C., finds it very difficult to absorb the new battalions which Dr. Nkrumah wills upon him. Does it occur to him that the cadres which he is so busily training are designed for militarist adventures across the borders of French West

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Africa, or even across the borders of neighbouring Nigeria?

Our short-sighted innocence in respect of Ghana's rapidly expanding army is equalled in every other field where British advisers ply their trade. Economists complete singularly fruitless missions as advisers to Dr. Nkrumah. They cannot understand why their political masters sidetrack so many of their no-doubt excellent plans for developing Ghana's economy, preferring to spend money on such unnecessary projects as a grandiose public meeting stadium in Accra or a second national airport. To the British end of "the partnership," these costly circuses seem the height of folly, quite contrary to the sound principles instilled in the African élite at the London School of Economics. We cannot understand how deep is the impulse in Ghana to create indigenous symbols of power and prestige. Anglicised Africans may be able to take pride in Westminster Abbey or Windsor Castle, but the men actually in power to-day want their own national monuments.

The same incomprehension governs reactions to the widespread growth of ministerial corruption. We had assumed that British rule had inculcated honesty in the public service. All the present evidence to the contrary still does not convince expatriate officials that working in the Ghana public service involves condoning corrupt practices which in other circumstances they would be the first to condemn. Partners must be given the benefit of every doubt. This same approach can be seen at its most far-fetched among the handful of British intellectuals led by Barbara Ward, their philosopher queen, who lend their minds to the propagation of the partnership myth. They steadfastly refuse to recognise the political realities, hoodwinking themselves—and others—that once Dr. Nkrumah has solved his initial difficulties Ghana will live up to Britain's imperial dream of a model African democracy. No doubt this is what Dr. Nkrumah says, just as he probably tells General Paley that he wants an efficient Ghana army so that it can make a "good impression" in the next coronation procession.

The handful of Africans who do understand or admire the principles of democratic government have either been deported or, in other ways, squeezed out of the public service. Their plight is a tragic one. They are the men whom the British trained to believe in the rule of law, the two-party system, democratic rights, honesty in public service, a free press, and so on. As a result they are profoundly ill at ease in modern Ghana.

Take, as another example of so-called partnership, the position of the British-owned *Daily Graphic* in Ghana, which the London *Daily Mirror* group own in Accra. It began as an independent-minded daily, prepared to comment impartially and, if need be, critically, on Ghana affairs. Since it was run by Western journalists, and backed with Western capital, it soon established itself as the main newspaper in the country. It was not long, however, before the Government began to object to its occasional criticism. So the principal African leader writer, Bankole Timothy, was summarily deported. The British management were politely warned that if they wanted to continue publication it would be advisable to adopt a policy of "political neutrality." It was quite wrong, the authorities pointed out, for a foreign company to interfere in Ghana's private affairs. Naturally enough, the London owners took the hint. Having put a lot of money into starting the paper they were far from anxious to see it shut down. To-day, therefore, the main Ghana newspaper is "politically neutral," which in effect means that it has ceased to criticise the Government. Yet because it is so obviously the best-printed and best-written paper it still enjoys its position as "the country's leading newspaper." No other Ghana newspaper can hope to compete. This means, in effect, that thanks to British intervention the ground for a healthy free press has been undermined. There are Opposition newspapers, but they can never hope to reach a mass public so long as the *Daily Graphic* dominates the scene. Such is the result of what was hailed as "a splendid experiment in black-and-white journalistic co-operation."

IT IS, of course, possible to justify a close and intimate involvement in Ghana's affairs on the plausible ground that it is important to ensure a friendly West Africa. Possibly diplomatic fruits of co-operation outweigh any damage that may be done to the healthy development of the Ghana body politic.

The difficulty here is that so long as Ghana remains within the Commonwealth, British public opinion at home refuses to accept this cynical view. However much Britons in Ghana may condone the action of Dr. Nkrumah's Government, Britons in Britain continue to express surprise and disapproval. Any warmth and mutual understanding engendered by the former is regularly dissipated by the hostility of the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

latter. Britain, therefore, has the worst of both worlds. Her representatives swallow their principles in Ghana, only to have the fruits of their sacrifice turned sour by hostile comment on Ghana at home.

As a representative of a London newspaper, whose frank comments and reportage on Ghana has earned it much ill-will, I have been repeatedly begged by British expatriates to show a little more tolerance. "You are destroying all our good work," they lamented. This seems to me to go to the very heart of the problem. For what in effect this request involves is a self-imposed censorship, with our press, and indeed public opinion as a whole, being asked to adopt a double standard of values: one for their own affairs and another for the affairs of Ghana.

This problem, of course, is not only limited to Ghana. It is relevant to all the newly-independent countries in Africa and Asia which remain within the Commonwealth. I do not myself see how the Mother Country can be expected to stop nagging unless it stops wanting to nag. And the only way it will stop wanting to nag is if it stops regarding its political principles as in any way important. And if it does this, then what will happen to these political principles at home?

The British people have made a religion of democracy. If they are asked to believe that its truths are only relevant to a few advanced societies, and can be entirely disregarded in the rest of the world's surface, the religion will soon lose its appeal. In the heyday of Christianity the faithful felt a strong urge to spread the Gospel to the four corners of the earth; evidence that it was far from suitable in many areas and among many peoples had a profoundly disintegrating effect on the faith in Europe itself. The same might well prove true of democracy, if areas where the West planted the seed are seen to produce a harvest of dictatorship.

The Commonwealth idea raises the relationship between Ghana and Britain from an alliance of mutual temporary convenience to a partnership of permanent principle. Whatever its modern interpreters may say, the Commonwealth does postulate some doctrinal affinity between its members. So long as it is called "the British Commonwealth," the Mother Country will inevitably demand some conformity to certain basic rules. Those who wish to see the Commonwealth continue, therefore, will inevitably find themselves either forever stretching the rules so as not to feel the need to expel those who break them, or nagging at the backsliders in an effort to persuade them to reform. Both reactions are equally undesirable. It is really intolerable that Britain's relationship with Ghana should make us choose between, on the one hand, condoning dictatorship and calling it African democracy, and, on the other, poisoning our relations by constant nagging and criticism.

There are, I know, a great many complicated economic reasons why Ghana should want to stay in the Commonwealth, and why Britain should encourage this preference. In the long-term, however, I am convinced that the Commonwealth is a disastrous basis for maintaining a satisfactory relationship between Africa and Britain. It casts Britain in one of two disagreeable rôles: either she is the interfering, censorious parent nagging at her grown-up child, or she is the over-indulgent parent whose refusal to see any fault in her erring offspring encourages further excesses. It seems to me, therefore, that the Commonwealth association enormously complicates a relationship whose basic outline could be quite clear—the maintenance of friendly relations with a country which (at any rate, for the time being) is the leader of West Africa. It is equally clear that Ghana needs assistance and capital from Britain. The basis for "partnership" exists. But the basis is mutual convenience—nothing more. How much healthier if the two countries recognised this by dropping the pretence of doctrinal affinity implicit in the Commonwealth association. This would not necessarily affect the degree of co-operation. It would merely put it on a more realistic footing. The mother-child relationship, so profoundly unsatisfactory to both parties, would be replaced by that of two worldly old friends who like each other's company without feeling any compulsion to pass judgment on each other's private lives. (This, incidentally, is already the kind of relationship which the United States is building up with Ghana—with great success.)

It is difficult to visit Ghana without coming away acutely conscious of how out-of-date our whole relationship with Ghana has already become.

To watch the British Governor-General reading the Queen's speech at the beginning of Parliament underlines the depth of our miscalculations. Presumably this constitutional set-up was not expected to involve the Queen's representative in announcing step-by-step the imposition of a one-man dictatorship. Yet this in

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact is what the Governor-General is having to do. Nor, when the Queen accepted to make an official tour of Ghana, was it anticipated in London just what the visit implied. Presumably it was intended to "cement the links of Commonwealth." Yet most decidedly this is not how the Ghana Government sees its purpose. Dr. Nkrumah intends to write the Queen's speeches himself—which, of course, he is perfectly entitled to do. But the spectacle of the great White Queen echoing Dr. Nkrumah's words like a willing puppet—despite the fact that he has announced in advance his intention of setting up a Republic soon after her departure—will merely confirm his people's view that he is an all-powerful miracle-man. The Queen, in short, is being used quite openly as a pawn in the Ghana struggle for power.

It would be absurd to blame Dr. Nkrumah for giving way to this temptation, just as it would be absurd to blame him for making use of all the other Commonwealth facilities. But it is surely time we gave a little sober thought to where the Commonwealth idea is leading us in West Africa. It may well be that allowing the Queen to be exploited, or the Governor-General embarrassed, does not matter very much. But issues of far greater importance are at stake. Continuing belief in the Commonwealth idea encourages Britain to take a wholly anachronistic attitude to what is happening in Africa.

We continue to see it, through eyes clouded with colonial memory, as a continent still blessedly immune from any indigenous virus of power-politics. How else can we ignore the fact that by 1960, for example, a deadly struggle for power will begin in West Africa between two Commonwealth members—Ghana and Nigeria. These two countries are natural rivals, whose respective leaders fear and hate each other. Yet we still believe that the magic of Commonwealth will somehow prevent this rivalry taking its natural course. We still believe that somehow Britain will never be forced to take sides in this rivalry and that the struggle between Ghana and Nigeria to gain control of France's disintegrating West African empire can be conducted through the machinery of "Commonwealth consultation."

This kind of blindness is a pathetic hangover of colonialism. It assumes that the new independent powers of Africa will behave differently from independent sovereign powers in other continents; that is to say, will base their foreign policies on Commonwealth fellowship rather than on considerations of power. It is revealing, for example, that Britain entrusts her relations with Ghana to the "Commonwealth Relations Office" rather than to the Foreign Office, as if the classical concepts of power diplomacy had no place in Africa. Ghana, of course, makes no such distinction. Her relations with Britain are conducted by the Foreign Minister. The Guinea-Ghana pact well illustrated the difference in approach. Dr. Nkrumah quite simply decided that a pact with Guinea served his country's interests. Its "effect on the Commonwealth" hardly entered into his calculations (as Mr. Botsio, the Foreign Minister, blithely admitted to me). He could not understand the outcry in the British Press. Its solemn articles analysing the pact's "possible effect on the Commonwealth" seemed to him quite irrelevant. He looked at me, when I argued this point, with the same kind of puzzled contempt as Bismarck would have looked at a British journalist who had pointed out that building up a German empire might complicate Berlin-London relations....

The Commonwealth, in short, far from helping to put Britain and Ghana on the same wavelength only serves to create additional and unnecessary confusion, which will grow far worse as the intricacies of African diplomacy proliferate with each new gift of independence. The truth is, surely, that Africa is moving into a period of great tumult and strife, when all countries involved will want the maximum freedom to manœuvre. If Britain is to keep pace with these changes and turn them to her advantage she, too, will need to jettison Commonwealth inhibitions. To allow her post-colonial relationships with Africa to be determined by the patterns of her imperial past would be to accept a burden which none of the African countries intends to shoulder. It is quite arguable, for example, that the kind of Commonwealth links which Britain plans to maintain with the white-dominated Central African Federation might in time militate against her friendly relations with whatever power-bloc emerges in West Africa. Alternatively, the Central African Federation might find it disadvantageous to maintain the Commonwealth link with a Britain involved in supporting one or other side in a Ghana-Nigerian conflict.

To suppose that Africa will not throw up these conflicts of loyalty and interest is just another hangover of colonial thinking. Diplomatic revolutions are just as likely in the new con-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tinents as in the old. But the Commonwealth idea only makes sense if these eventualities are ignored. It only makes sense if it is assumed that Africa after independence is prepared to stay in the same mould as before. If, on the other hand, my premise of flux and tumult is correct, the only sensible or practicable relationships will be temporary alliances reflecting the shifting winds of ever-changing diplomatic situations.

Even if this is true, it may be objected, why precipitate the change? Why not maintain the Commonwealth idea as long as possible?

The answer, it seems to me, is that the longer it is maintained the more painful will be the final sundering. The point surely is that at some point Ghana is bound to leave the Commonwealth. None of the Ghanaians I talked to doubted this. But why wait for an issue to arise which will bring the inevitable about in an atmosphere of recrimination and bitterness? If the decision was taken now it would be possible to exchange the links of Commonwealth for those of alliance. If the break comes later, when Ghana, for example, sends her troops across the Ivory Coast border in Togoland, it will be infinitely more difficult for both countries to work out a sensible relationship for the future. The Commonwealth, in short, as well as bedevilling the relationship between Ghana and Britain on the domestic political level, also carries within the seeds of formidable diplomatic tension.

I HAVE left to the last the first thing that strikes one about Ghana: the extraordinary absence of any colour-consciousness either among the blacks or the whites.

It is incredible how quickly one ceases to be aware that Africans are black. After a few days in Accra I found myself eating, drinking, dancing, talking with Africans as if the colour bar had never existed. This experience is not limited to white visitors who don't have to live in the place. The night-clubs are full of young English residents entertaining their coloured girl friends with all the polite formalities previously reserved for English country maidens. They are also full of young Englishmen showing a degree of public affection towards coloured women which would have been quite inconceivable a few years ago. Nor is it only the young generation who seem to have peeled off colour inhibition.

I spent a delightful afternoon at an army officers' club up-country watching the annual tennis tournament. It did not seem at all unnatural to hear a middle-aged English captain shouting "Well done, Sir!" to a young African major, or, later at the bar, to hear the English commanding officer—a typical Sandhurst product—"old boying" his African second-in-command. Even more revealing, at one Government rest-house I stopped at, the English manageress who ran it—a Bournemouth landlady type—asked me if I would mind sharing my room as she was short of accommodation. It did not occur to her to point out that the other man in question was black.

Understandably enough, this absence of colour-awareness has been acclaimed as heralding "a new era of black-white understanding." I fear that this is an illusion. Colour was never the real barrier. But because it was always assumed to be, we find it difficult to realise that, having overcome it, other much more impassable barriers still exist. I frequently found myself hurting African feelings, not by treating them as blacks, but by treating them as whites; not by assuming that they are different, but by assuming that they are the same. One feels so relieved to discover that differences of skin pigmentation do not matter that one is tempted to ignore the really profound differences of history, culture, religion, and custom which do exist.

It is, of course, a very wonderful thing that at last white men and black men should treat each other like members of the same species. But it would be a pity if this long-delayed flash of the obvious blinded us to something equally obvious: that common membership of the same species is no guarantee of mutual friendship or understanding. The truth is that far from closing the gap between Africa and Europe, the evaporation of colour prejudice may well tend to widen it. So long as white men and black men were separated by irrational colour prejudice which kept them at arm's-length, neither bothered to get to know the other. The two ways of life could hardly be said to clash because they never came face to face. The whites regarded the blacks as unassimilable, and the blacks regarded the whites as unapproachable. Neither took the other seriously. To-day they take each other very seriously indeed. When I first arrived in Ghana it seemed rather comic; it all seemed an elaborate charade, as indeed it used to be in the colonial days. But now that the Ministers really are Ministers and exercise real power, one soon forgets how they are dressed and how they talk. These characteristics no longer seem worth noticing. One listens to what they have to say instead of being amused by how they say

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it; one watches the glint in their eyes instead of the roll; one seeks to discover what is going on beneath the skin instead of being fascinated by its colour.

The point is surely that so long as the colour of the black man was the most interesting thing about him the whites never bothered with the other differences. Now that the colour bar is ended and the black man has achieved his independence, we are being forced to probe a little deeper. My own impression is that this process, far from leading to an inter-racial "synthesis," has instead created a clearer awareness of basic antithesis.

I found it impossible, for example, to discuss politics with a great majority of Ghanaians whom I met. One gets on all right for the first half-hour, which in the old days would have been all that was called for. But once the conversation descends below the level of banality, all contact is lost. So long as one does not try to analyse what is actually meant by "freedom," "democracy," etc., everything goes swimmingly. But once the conversation launches out into the meaning behind these words it soon dries up. I suppose it was easy enough in the old colour-bar days to ignore this. The whites were so surprised that the African could use English words at all that they did not particularly worry if they really understood their meaning. It was not thought necessary for the African to understand the inner meaning of words any more than a child tracing a complicated picture is required to understand the artistic skills which went into the drawing in the first place. But now that one finds oneself sitting on the verandah after dinner talking about Parliament, say, with the Speaker of the Ghana House of Commons, or discussing the dangers of inflation at lunch with an official of the Bank of Ghana, or listening to the Curator of the Ashanti National Museum expounding his views about culture—now, in short, that Africans have graduated into positions of real power, one is no longer impressed that a black man should know anything at all, but appalled that a Speaker, a Bank official, or Museum Curator should know so little.

The colour bar made it easy for the whites to assume that the African was much more European and much less African than he actually is. The kind of racial intimacy which Ghana now makes possible swiftly removes such illusions. After the third whisky-and-soda on the verandah, for example, an African politician may feel sufficiently relaxed, which he would never have done in the old days, to admit his real motive for having taken some particular action. This was how, for example, I became aware of a whole new dimension in Ghanaian politics—ju-ju superstition. I had been arguing far into the night with an African politician the pros and cons of Dr. Nkrumah's arrest of forty-three members of the Opposition. For hours we discussed in true European style whether there had been a plot; whether the Government had been right to refuse a trial, etc., etc. We seemed to be at cross-purposes, getting nowhere, until my African friend put an end to the argument by saying: "Anyhow, Nkrumah can't afford to take any risks; the witch-doctors had told him there was trouble in the air...." I did not ask him to elaborate. I doubt if he would have, even if I had. I think we both realised that there was no meeting-ground. The reality behind the ju-ju was beyond my comprehension, just as the reality behind the rule of law was beyond his. We both knew the words but in neither case did we know enough to make further argument worthwhile.

* * * *

P.S.: Reading over (in London) what I have written, I realise that it dwells more on the shadows than the sunshine. Yet, oddly enough, my overall impression of Ghana was far from depressing. Blessed by nature, it is a country which can afford to make mistakes. Unlike Asia, where starvation and over-population keep passions at the boil, it can afford to take the march towards modernity at a more leisurely pace. Unlike Asia again (or the Arab world, for that matter), there is no hatred of the West. Because the past does not seem to rankle, the future seems genuinely open. The description "uncommitted" means what it says, instead of being a euphemism for "lost to the West." But it is precisely because our relations with Ghana could prove so promising that it is necessary to think about them with a fresh mind. Liberal sentimentality and conservative prejudice may be good enough for those great areas of the world where the die is already cast against us. But with Ghana, with Africa, it is still worthwhile to make the awful effort to see things as they are.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sidney Hook

A Talk with Vinoba Bhave

Letter from India

WHEN I came I knew very little about Vinoba Bhave except that he was "continuing the Ghandian tradition" and had initiated "a mass movement in the villages" which gave land gifts to agricultural labourers. But it was impossible to read the newspapers or to discuss the contemporary situation in India without running up against his name and influence, and the hopes and doubts he inspired. It was Jayaprakash Narayan who suggested I visit Vinoba for a talk, and I accepted with alacrity. I left Bombay by an early morning flight; Narayan had preceded me by rail the night before and gone ahead by train to within a few miles of Vinoba's encampment. My sixty miles, first to Mehtana and then to the village of Walim, I made by car, the roughest ride ever (with the possible exception of the journey from Pagan to Chouk in Burma), almost four hours in an Indian-assembled Fiat which was used as if it were a jeep or small tank.

The driver of the Fiat was a socialist, and an admirer of Narayan, a Rotarian, a geologist by training, pro-Western, very knowledgeable about India's Five-Year Plans, and full of bravura optimism which he carried over into his driving. Wherever he saw a thin wisp of a trail, he assumed it was a road in being, and wherever he came to a fork he made any lightning-quick decision. The result was a bone-breaking, jolting ride over gullies, eroded fields, scrub and brush, never previously traversed by automobile. He kept saying: "These roads are temporary. Next year we will have black top." On the way back I discovered that there was a fairly good road although J. P. Narayan complained that even this did not seem to be the right one.)

The difference between the West and India is that Indian roads are inhabited. There never was an horizon devoid of human beings, cattle, or signs of their habitation. We seemed always in sight of some living thing. But nothing prepared me for the spectacle of some thirty thousand people clustered in and around the quarters where Vinoba was resting when I arrived. They had come from several villages, some quite distant. There was an air of excitement as if a religious festival or carnival were in progress. Most of the adults and children seemed to be in holiday dress. There were few shoes, but clouds of dust were kicked up by the milling crowds. A speaker's stand had been prepared in a field several furlongs away from the white-washed hut which Vinoba occupied, and already people were sitting in clusters out in the field awaiting his afternoon talk.

Together with the Narayans we adjourned for lunch, and my repast was frugal—fruit (and boiled water which I had brought along in a thermos jug). My hosts seemed amused at my Spartan meal but they, too, ate sparingly of the Indian meal prepared in the huge cauldrons under the open sky. I made a tour of the simple buildings, and Narayan took his afternoon nap. When he awoke he

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accompanied me to Vinoba, who had asked that I write out some questions. I had prepared many but at Narayan's suggestion pruned them down to essential principles. The political and factual data he would fill me in on himself. Vinoba's answers to my questions were taken down in shorthand by a young man and woman who worked alternately, and there must be a record of them. But when I spoke they merely listened with poised pencils, waiting for Vinoba's reply.

Vinoba's building was only about thirty yards away, but a passage had to be cleared for us through the dense throng, shoulder to shoulder around the ramshackle gates. When we entered, Vinoba was seated on the floor on a cushion, reading. He seemed oblivious of our approach until Narayan, slipping down beside him, said: "Here is our visitor. . . ."

Vinoba is, of course, thin, slight, ascetic. When he looked towards me I saw a benign, grandfatherly person, with a rebellious curl at the end of his little white beard. He reminded me of a mild-mannered Rabbinical scholar who had been interrupted in his reading. His voice was firm and his English was good as he welcomed me and made enquiries about how I had come and from where. To my surprise he invited me to remain and walk with him the next day, and made me feel, when I explained that my schedule prevented it, that I lacked seriousness.

"Ah! It is a pity that you are too busy to talk with me."

I protested feebly: my presence showed on the contrary how eager I was.

"I mean you are too busy to walk with me despite the distance you have come. You would learn more about our work that way." Vinoba then turned to my questions—reading them slowly aloud, and then answering.

MY FIRST question was: Did he believe that any religious commitment or doctrine was essential to his programme of land reform and social reconstruction, or did moral values or a purely ethical commitment without any religious overbeliefs constitute a sufficient base?

"To me there is no difference between religious values and ethical or moral values," he replied. "However it is true that in the Indian tradition, religion is not only a matter of moral values but of the Dhamma which involves certain beliefs in another existence. But these do not enter into my discussion of the important questions. It is not required that anybody holds them to judge the worth of our proposals. Anyhow, religion is important in history and society because it expresses moral values."

My second question was: assuming he believed in the relevance of religion to the problems of social change, how did he explain the failure of traditional religion to come to grips with the problems of man and society in the past and present?

"To the extent that religion has failed in the past, it can be attributed to two general causes. First, religion has not been sufficiently universal. Religions in the past have emphasised their differences from each other, and these differences often became the source of conflicts which made conditions worse. Secondly, religion in the past was not scientific. It taught things which were not true, which ran counter to scientific evidence. The main thing always is truth. Any belief which is untrue in the end is bound to fail."

I confess I was startled. These were unexpected answers to my questions. I said that as a humanist and rationalist I heartily agreed with him, especially if no religious doctrines were to be given credence where they could not be substantiated by the same kind of evidence we accepted in scientific affairs. I wanted to know, however, if the ethical views which were common to all religions were enough to solve our problems. Weren't they too vague and general? Didn't we find that in many situations of conflict both sides appealed to them with equal fervour? How could they be a guide in a strike or in differences in national policy where conflicts of interest were involved? Shouldn't the emphasis fall first upon the objective study of the facts of conflict and the exploration of alternative solutions?

To this Vinoba said several things. It was a question of sincerity. If there were differ-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ences despite the profession of agreement, it might mean that one or both parties were not sincere—were not interested in the truth. If they wanted to find the truth, they would make all the investigations which were necessary. Existing conditions in any given place or time must be carefully studied and when we understand them then we can rely upon human intelligence to find the right way. It was not enough to talk about science, industrialisation, and modernisation in relation to society as a whole. They had to be brought down to where people lived here and now. For example, most people in India lived in the villages. Industrialisation had to start with the local unit so that there would not be too sharp, too uprooting a break with their way of life.

HE RETURNED to my written questions. "What in general is your conception of a good society?"

"A good society," he replied (after some hesitation), "is one in which there are no conflicts of interests among men, in which men live according to their obligations to each other." I objected that I could not conceive of such a society so long as men were men and not angels (and that I even had doubts about angels). In any society there would be conflicts about some things, and I gave a few illustrations. He then qualified his answer and said that the absence of conflict was an ideal which could be progressively approached. One society would be better than another where there would be fewer conflicts. I raised the question whether social development depended upon conflicts of interest and asked whether it would not be more fruitful to conceive of the good society in terms of procedures rather than of goals, as a society in which all conflicts of interest are resolved by intelligent enquiry, the give-and-take of democratic process.

Vinoba did not reply to this directly. He answered that the important element in a good society was the absence of any coercion, the use of non-violent methods. "The fundamental values of the good society are Truth, Compassion, and Love. Only by relying upon and following them, can we achieve either a good life or a good society in which violence has no place. . . ." He went on in this vein and quoted in Sanskrit from the Sutras to illustrate the perennial wisdom of the Indian tradition.

I had two difficulties with this, and we had a warm and friendly exchange which lasted for almost a half-hour until it was time for Vinoba to speak to the assembled crowds. First, I asked him why he assumed that "truth, compassion, and love" were always compatible. The facts of moral experience showed that sometimes they *were* in conflict with each other. To which he replied that the value of Truth was primary. But sometimes, I persisted, out of compassion we do not tell the truth (or the whole truth) in our personal relations to others. Sometimes the truth is a weapon in the hands of the cruel. It was not enough to establish a scheme of values, for each situation seemed to have its own unique good which required that we choose between (or mediate between) values deemed absolute. In other words I did not see how any value could be regarded as absolute—except possibly intelligence, which in contradistinction to all other values is the judge of its own limitations.

Vinoba seemed puzzled by all this, but nonetheless persisted in his view that one could not ground the necessity of non-violence in human affairs unless one accepted the trinity of truth, compassion, and love. If they were not absolute values, then non-violence was not an absolute value. I asked whether he recognised any distinction between the scope and validity of the values of "truth, compassion, and love," and its corollary, non-violence, in personal relations and in social life. He replied in the negative. He implied that to recognise any such distinction would be to introduce an element of insincerity into our moral experience; it was this divorce between personal and social morality which seemed to him at the root of many social evils.

I agreed, but said that I was afraid of all absolutes, and thought that in the field of personal morality his trinity of values must

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sometimes be breached. We cannot always be kind when we are truthful, and truthful when we are compassionate. On the other hand, in the field of social morality we cannot always be non-violent because of our love and compassion for others. He objected to this as one of the oldest illusions in human relations, and as the source of the ever-recurrent cycle of combating evil with evil means.

I asked him whether, out of compassion for the certain victims of a determined and wicked aggressor, I was ever justified in using violence to restrain the aggressor and, if necessary to save the lives of innocent victims, to kill him. He answered firmly in the negative. I tried the graphic illustration of Hitler and then of a pyromaniac about to destroy hundreds and then cited cases nearer home. Each time he replied that one must be prepared to lay down his life to save the lives of others, but not to take life. I pressed and pointed out that this assumed we could save the lives of others by sacrificing our own. But the conditions of the problems I put before him—and they were not artificial problems, but arose again and again in the struggle for freedom and human dignity—assumed that the *only* way we could stop the slaughter of the innocents was by using violence against those who were about to employ it. "To stand by," I said at one point, "and watch the slaughter of those for whom we have the love and compassion you enjoin on us, when by our actions we could save them, is to share the responsibility for the evil done them. One must be more than human, or less than human, to live by the creed of non-violence in such a situation."

I shall never forget the answer with which he brought the discussion of this issue to a close. He said: "In such cases if you used violence I could find it in my heart to forgive you."

NARAYAN had joined the discussion when I asserted that, as I understood Gandhi, not even he had made an absolute fetish of non-violence in all circumstances. Narayan countered that Gandhi had said that cowardice was worse than the use of violence. If one refrained from using violence against an aggressor about to commit some horrible and despicable crime only because one was afraid of his own skin, it would be better to fight for the victim even with violence. If one remained rational and unafraid, ready to die if need be to prevent evil, then one could not breach the absolute rule against non-violence. Later (on the way home) we continued the discussion with whose earlier outcome Narayan had been unhappy. He had understood me as arguing for a general philosophy of violent resistance to evil, as if the question were simply an either-or. I explained, however, that all I was concerned with was to avoid the *fetishism* of non-violence on the basis of a philosophy of non-violence. Unless extreme or limiting situations were recognised, in which we could make an *intelligent* use of force against those who were embarked on a policy of total terror, we would be turning the world over to sadistic monomaniacs like Hitler and Stalin and to jolly gangsters like Khrushchev.

Towards the close of my discussion with Vinoba I observed that I found his position quite compatible, except for the danger of fetishising non-violence, with scientific humanism. He replied that I had overlooked a central point.

"There is something operating in experience completely beyond the realm of ethics and science. That is the self, or better, the 'I.' After all, it is *we* who must know, it is *we* who decide or choose. But what is it that knows? When we strive for self-knowledge, what is the object of that knowledge? Here is something that cannot be grasped by any scientific knowledge, something which is the source of all values. It is the 'I'—and it is the gateway to religion."

I raised some difficulties with this. I asked whether the nature of the "I" did not depend upon the biological, social, historical, and psychological contexts of experience, whether the consciousness of self-identity was anything more than memory of continuities in the stream of events. He implied that it was something over and above all these. I then

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

asked how he distinguished between true self-knowledge and false self-knowledge; and argued that since our knowledge of others and others' knowledge of us was sometimes more accurate than the deliverances of self-knowledge, the self could not be understood as something independent of its history or total behaviour in space and time. It seemed to me that the word "I" was either a term of mere reference or a shifting symbol of a complex of histories and experiences with a locus in a given body. Without some involvement in matter or energy or history I did not see how one "I" can be distinguished from another "I."

When I said this Vinoba and Narayan exchanged smiles. Vinoba replied, "Perhaps they cannot." The camel's nose of Indian metaphysics had gotten into the discussion, but the exigency of time kept it tethered.

Two other questions I recall putting to Vinoba. One was whether he thought he could achieve his programme of social reconstruction in India "without organising a political movement." He replied that if he were to attempt to develop a political movement, he would divide his followers, that he wanted to transcend all the political differences and organisations in India with an attitude and programme whose spirit would influence existing groups. Later, Narayan explained that Vinoba was already a political force to be reckoned with, even though he was waging his struggle for the betterment of India with spiritual weapons. Testimony to Vinoba's political influence was the fact that a man like Nehru took time from a busy political life publicly to visit and consult with Vinoba, to be seen with him, and to impress upon the Indian masses that he was sympathetic with what Vinoba stood for. (When I was at Ahmedtabad I was told that when Vinoba visited the city he drew a greater outpouring of people than India's popular Prime Minister.)

The other question to Vinoba was whether, in addition to Gandhi, he had been inspired by other social or religious figures. He replied with the only touch of asperity I detected in his remarks that he was not concerned with tracing his indebtedness to any other figure including Gandhi, and that it was not personalities which should inspire belief and action but ideals and ideas.

When I left I walked to the assembly field. A passage was made by cordoning off bystanders. Thousands of eyes stared at me as if some of Vinoba's *charisma* had rubbed off on me. A few minutes later Vinoba followed, walking with amazing swiftness, preceded by shouts and hails that rippled like waves through the crowds. Vinoba mounted the platform and his audience kept shouting *"Victory to Mankind!"* It hushed when he arose. His voice, even over the loudspeaker, seemed frail and reedy. He spoke in Gujerati. Narayan told me he was not making a plea for *Boodhan* or *Gramdan* but for the "People's pence" to support the men and women in the Boodhian movement who had dedicated their lives to work in the villages.

I do not know enough to make an intelligent assessment of Vinoba Bhave's influence on the shape of future Indian events. He has obviously captured the imagination of the villages, not merely as a successor to Gandhi but in his own right as a holy man. He seems to me to be more intelligent and more learned than Gandhi but not so shrewd. Surely no movement can succeed in India which sets itself against him. His "ethical socialism" makes it possible for all sorts of people to cooperate with him, but I cannot see how his programme can solve India's food problems, its population problem, its problems of education, industrialisation, and modernisation. Could his like exist in the Soviet Union, Communist China, or in the United States? He is on the side of freedom and self-government. But in international affairs India's policy in the future will in all likelihood be determined by Nehru and Krishna Menon rather than by this barefoot, lovable sage.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wayland Young

Sitting on a Fortune

The Prostitute in London

"I'd been working in that factory five years before I realised I was sitting on a fortune all the time."

A PROSTITUTE

THIS article is not about what ought to be done about prostitution, but about what it is. There are two good recent books about it: *Women of the Streets* (1955), written by Rosalind Wilkinson and edited by C. H. Rolph, and *Cast the First Stone* (published in London in 1958) written by Judge John M. Murtagh and Sara Harris. The first is a sociological study conducted by Mrs. Wilkinson among prostitutes she engaged in conversation as they came out of the London Magistrates' Courts, and kept in touch with later. It is a sober and balanced job, excellent within its limits, which are that it includes no call-girls and hardly touches on the prostitutes' sex-lives. The second consists mainly of a few life stories written up with unabashed sensationalism but great intelligence and feeling. Judge Murtagh sees prostitutes day in day out at the principal court in New York City where they are dealt with. My own small experience confirms all that they say, and in what follows I rely on them to a certain extent. (But the best piece of writing about prostitutes and their clients, indeed the only one I known which goes straight to the heart of the thing in one intuitive leap, is Jean Genet's play, *Le Balcon*.)

Who can know a prostitute? Not her client; his relation with her is hopelessly charged with his need, his guilt, his money, and his natural tendency to believe that she rather enjoys him. He goes to her for illusion and gets it; he cannot know her. A magistrate cannot know her; he sees her day after day in an endless parade: guilty, fine; guilty, fine; guilty, fine. She is no more than a raw material in the processing-plant of justice. A probation officer can know her a little, but only in a special way. The probation officer sees her when things are bad, when she is unhappy, when she wants to get off the game. She also sees the very young ones. She does not see the adult prostitute as a going concern, in her natural surroundings. A reporter looking for a routine story on vice or the organisation of vice cannot know her. He gets a stereotyped response: Yes, there is vice. Yes, there is even a little organisation of vice. Five pounds, thank you. The Wolfenden Committee did not see a single prostitute. Her own friends and associates, her ponce, the other girls on her street, they can know her all right; but they are themselves part of the underworld, a very real thing, and they cannot see how it fits in with the rest of society. They are inside the tank looking out. The rest of us are outside the tank looking in.

What follows is the result of a handful of short-lived friendships, which I built up with prostitutes, both street-girls and call-girls. This isn't easy. I asked the advice of the first I got to know on how to approach others.

Well, you'll find it very difficult. I'll tell you the best way for a street-girl. Put a bottle of gin in your pocket and go up to her and settle the price. Then go back to where she works, to her gaff, and pay up as soon as you're inside the door. She'll say: "Do you want to see some pictures?" You say: "No thanks, I only want to talk. I've got a train to catch in half an hour." Or: "My wife's left me and I'm lonely." Then she'll open up; you'll be money for jam. You say: "Nice place you've got here," whether she has or not. "Thanks," she says. "Cost you a lot, I suppose?" you say. She says: "Mind your own

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flipping business," or else: "Yes, would you believe it; I pay twenty-five quid a week for it," which isn't true. "That's a lot," you say, and then she tells you what a mean bastard the landlord is, which isn't true either. She's got a ruddy great alsatian, and you say does she like animals? And she says: "Oh yes, I love them," which isn't true because it's there for protection. Then you say: "Generally people who like animals are fond of children," and she says of course she is, she has a little girl of eight who's away at school in the country. Then she brings out a snapshot of someone else's little girl. Or else she's doing it for her old mum.

So I didn't try this, but always managed to get some sort of introduction. Even so, it took time and effort to get past the natural initial belief that I was a perverse client looking for kicks through conversation, or an agent of the police, or a reporter from one of the Sunday hypocriticals. Next there was a stage of absolute amazement at anybody simply wanting to know them for their own sakes and lastly, even more naturally, a relaxation, a holiday feeling, a flood of reminiscence, of comment, and of questions about how the other half lives, about my own marriage and sex-life.

BUT first I'm in a difficulty about language. The language of prostitutes is the language of love-making, and we all make love. But when we come to write about love, or to talk about it with people we don't know very well, we use a different language, one compounded of heavy latinisms and coy periphrases. We say *penis* and *intercourse* as though we were so many specimens in a botanist's collection instead of men and women made of flesh and spirit. Or we say *having a good time*, as though we were children at a party, or *making time* with someone, as though we were trains running late. But as soon as we get into bed we begin to talk English like people.

A lawyer who represented a prostitute in a divorce case told me the following story. He said to her during the conference while he was preparing her case: "And did you go to bed with this man?" "No," she said, "certainly not." A day or two later he found out, only just in time for the case, that to her "going to bed with" someone meant spending the whole night with them. They were not speaking the same language and, if it had not been for a chance clarification, that lawyer would have based his whole case on something other than the truth. The moral of the story is that when it comes to something important, in other words when you are dealing with reality, as you must in a law-court and should in literature, there is no substitute for English. In every sphere of life except sex it is taken for granted that the best language is the clearest language.

So, too, in the history of English poetry, each successive revolution in poetic diction, approved, welcomed, and taught in the schools, is based on a rectification of the tendency to slide away into remote and artificial language. The preface to *Lyrical Ballads* with its insistence on the short, the household, the immediate and earthy in diction, is the usual starting point for literary criticism in our schools. The pattern recurred most recently a quarter of a century ago with the poetic revolution carried through particularly by Auden and Spender, the revolution one could call "low-falutin."

In sexual matters as much as any other, unreal and remote language is a bar to understanding and consequently favours error. In this article I have tried to use a language which is as short, clear, human, and ordinary as is compatible with the remaining taboos on certain words and uses of words.

A WHORE is a woman who goes through the motions of love for money. If you pay her enough she pretends to come.

There's some of them lies still as stones, they think it's more ladylike or something; but I say they don't know which side their bread's buttered. Listen; if you lie still the bloke may spend half the night sweating away. But if you bash it about a bit he'll come all the quicker and get out and away and leave you in peace. Stupid to spin it out longer than you need, isn't it? I learned that from Margaret. Wonderful actress, that girl. I learned from her in exhibitions when I was first on the game. She wasn't the first girl I did an exhibition with; that was a coloured girl who used to pitch near me. I was dead scared of any of that at first; I can't bear a woman near me. I go all rigid; as a matter of fact the man sometimes thinks I'm loving it. Well, anyhow, one night this coloured girl comes across to me and says: "Bloke here wants an exhibition; three pounds each. Will you help me out?" I was scared, but she said do it just to help her, so I said: "Do we have to go turn and turn about?" But she said she'd lead all the time. Was I grateful! Anyhow, like I said, this Margaret and I used to do exhibitions after that. Wonderful actress. Of course you know they're all faked,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exhibitions are. It's quite easy to hide what's really going on. It was from her I learned to grunt and groan.

And then, you know, there are all sorts of little gentle things you can do to a client so that with a bit of luck they come before they even get into me. When they do I look ever so loving and gentle and say: "Traitor." Well, I'm not paid just to be a bag, am I? I'm paid to make them feel good. It's easy for me, so why not? That's how I see it.

Mark that she learned to "grunt and groan" not from herself, not from any man, but from another whore. And that one word "Traitor!" sums up the whole structure of pretence which is whoring.

The pictures on the wall? I cut them out of a German pornographic book. No, I don't use photos much. There's some likes them, and occasionally it helps to get a bashful client started. I did a day's photographic work yesterday, as a matter of fact, but that wasn't pornographic. I've been asked to, though. Bloke rang up once and offered me fifty pounds for an afternoon's work. Said he'd find the male model. Said he'd take my head out too and put someone else's in. But I didn't believe him. And anyhow, I don't do that.

The photographs are sold, quarterplate size, in most of the shops in Soho which have girlie mags on show above the counter. They come in cellophane packets of five; ten shillings for breasts being kneaded by a pair of man's hands, a pound for "attitudes," and twenty-five shillings "when you get some action." Also "kinky" (perverse) and lesbian scenes and trios for twenty or twenty-five shillings. Nobody looks happy in them.

What is the whore's own sex-life? Here are several glimpses from different girls. What is common to them all is the feeling of discrepancy, of abnormality, of "I'm different," "I can't," or "Let me explain."

Have you ever come yourself?

Yes, I think so; twice. Twice in my life I've thought to myself—now maybe this is what they talk about. That was before I was on the game.

And didn't you want to keep that man?

Keep him? No! I couldn't bear the sight of him afterwards. He couldn't get out quick enough for me.

I get my kicks from dancing, Latin American dancing mostly. I don't know, there's something about the movements. My first man was after a dance; I didn't know where I was. And the father of my child was after a dance too. It's always dancing with me.

I'm rather abnormally built. You see, my clitoris is very high—I'm not embarrassing you by talking like this? I guess everything's a bit far apart with me. I can only come if a man realises this; but I can't ask them, can I? They're not there for my pleasure; I'm there for theirs. That's how the game is. I tell you, it's not all ninepins.

I don't know why I like girls. It feels safer, somehow. And I'm not talking about pregnancy. I think everybody agrees now—take Kinsey—that the clitoris is where women get their pleasure.

The man in the boat's my mascot. As a matter of fact it's every woman's mascot, though there's not many men'll recognise it.

You know, the young men seem to be getting bigger and bigger. It must be the Welfare State. I hate it though; it splits me.

Sandra would be no good on the game. She likes men and she enjoys sex.

As to how they get on to the game. Mrs. Wilkinson in her book lays stress on a preliminary period of vague, floating promiscuity, of what she calls elsewhere "increasing irrelation to society." This is something different from maladjustment, which she sees as a deformed relationship, a warped and impracticable relationship, but one which may be as strong as any other. "Irrelation" is an absence of all relationship. The girl comes to London—most London whores come from provincial industrial towns—and bums around living with this man and that, perhaps frequenting the Stepney cafés which the Government is now going to have watched. Or perhaps as a hostess in a night-club; there are one or two night-clubs which seem to be simply highroads into the game. This intermediate phase is the one when the girl is called a *mystery*; is she going to take to the game or not? Generally speaking, nobody pushes her. This is an important point; the popular conception of well-organised recruiting agencies is a mistaken one. The motive for entertaining the illusion is fairly clear: the more a "respectable" man idealises women, and the higher the value he sets on the merits of conventional society, the less will he believe any girl capable of abandoning it except under pressure or devious corruption. To such a man, all

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whores will be "poor unfortunate girls," and his mind will people Soho and Stepney with drug-peddlers, razor-slashers, and so forth.

I have heard two stories about young men, operating alone and by kindness, who attach newcomers to themselves, lay them, gradually get them used to the bright lights and the pretty things, and then gently ease them out on to the street. But both these stories came from girls who believed that they had themselves only just found out in time and escaped, so they would have every reason to play the thing up. Both very much regretted having to break with such smashing young men and looked back on that time with nostalgia. That's all.

One way on to the game is even before they come to London. A girl who has been easy at school—not generally because she likes sex but because she wants to find out if it isn't possible to like it more—takes work as a waitress or chambermaid at a provincial hotel. She sleeps with the odd commercial traveller, and then one day one of them gives her a pair of nylons. The next one gives her a pound to buy her own, and the penny drops. She has been paid for it. Next stop London, and the big money.

Perhaps the commonest way in of all is by the urging of an older friend or elder sister.

Wake up, girl; how much longer are you going to exist *on seven pounds a week? Come on out and* live. *You leave it to me and you'll be earning a hundred a week before you've even noticed.*

For instance, Dorothy, a three-pound street-walker. A pound more for stripping, but she'll do it all the same if the client can't raise the extra. Hates kissing. Undertakes most kinks if she's feeling like it, but no buggery which is grounds for money back and throw them out. She was illegitimate, and brought up without a father. When she came home after school she would find her mother smooching away with some man. When she was eleven and twelve the neighbourhood kids used to ask her: "Had your R.C. yet?" She did not know what it meant, but shook her head, and they said: "All right, you can stay with us." R.C. meant "red change," or first period. She had her R.C. one day during an exam at school. She fainted, and the invigilator carried her to the headmistress who said: "Are you ill?" "I don't think so." "I mean, er, have you eaten anything?" Yes, she had steadied her nerves by guzzling Rowntree's clear gums, and to this day feels sick at the sight of them. So much for sex education.

At sixteen she had her first man, and at nineteen bore a child to an American soldier. While she was carrying the child she took up with a medical student.

He taught me hygiene, too. And I may say most of the girls don't know a thing about it. They just put some soap on their fingers and tickle themselves a bit. But he taught me to use a douche, and not more than once a week, otherwise it hurts your insides. He told me masturbation gives you a bellyache, too.

When her mother asked her who the child's father was, she said she really didn't know. She had passed out at a party and didn't know what had happened to her. Her mother legally adopted the child, a girl, and Dorothy never sees either of them. She blames her mother for her own upbringing and fears she may bring up her grandchild in the same way, but it's nothing to do with her. It's miles away now.

After the birth of the child she came to London and took work as a barmaid. She went concurrently with the manager of the hotel in the afternoons and a well-off married man every third Sunday. One night in a clipjoint she got drunk and started telling the manager of this joint what was wrong with the place; the wallpaper was all wrong, the place was dirty, the girls were badly dressed. He took her on the spot as his mistress and co-manager, and she lived with him for four years. Then it broke up, and she was underfed and began hitting the bottle. (This was the "period of increasing irrelation.") She had a taste for "pretty things" and bright lights, as well as for drink; one night she got drunk at a party and the next morning found she'd been paid. (It wasn't till the day after she told me this that I realised it was the same story she'd told her mother about the baby.) So there she was, a whore. She began walking the street, though she didn't stand yet.

Standing is the end of irrelation; you are accepted into the underworld. Some older whore invites the walker to pitch beside her; if the street is full, a new pitch is carved out, but usually there's plenty of room. There may be a lesbian arrangement, and there will probably be something of a team about it. "With your looks and youth, you could earn well; that is, if you consent to profit by my experience." Perhaps they will do exhibitions together. The older woman may get a rake-off in return for her

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patronage. The arrangement will be a fleeting one, like everything in the underworld.

HERE is another life story, one from the other end of the social scale; prostitution, like everything else in England, is shot through with class values. Mary is now a successful call-girl, and occasionally reaches the maximum possible earnings, up to fifty pounds for an all-night fix. When she was twelve she was "the only girl without a title" at a snob boarding-school run by nuns. Her parents were cold, but not cruel. The father was blind and the mother, having had a total hysterectomy, cut out love not only from her bed but also from her whole life. Then, within a year, three things happened to Mary. She found papers on her mother's desk which taught her that she was the illegitimate daughter of a housemaid. Her true mother had put her in an orphanage when she was three years old, and she had been adopted by the people she thought were her parents on medical advice to compensate them for the death of their own son. She had her first period at school, didn't know what was happening, feared disease, and was told to take an aspirin. And thirdly, perhaps not surprisingly, she created a scandal at school by refusing to believe in the Virgin Birth. Her adoptive parents were sent for, and she was told to have faith.

At seventeen she wanted to go to a university, but was taken abroad instead by a relative of her adoptive parents. She was not allowed to learn the language of the country, or to take a job there. She quarrelled, came back to London, and took work as a hotel receptionist. Her adoptive parents died, and she set to work to trace her true family. She found her grandmother first, herself the illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate woman; there hadn't been a marriage in the family for generations. The grandmother was not interested. Later she found her mother, and this last door slammed in her face with a peculiarly horrible twist when she learned that her mother had put her away when she was three because she was pregnant again. She had preferred the unborn child to the child of three, and had in fact brought the second child up.

A sitter? Nobody with that childhood could not have turned round and got their own back on society? The axe of bad circumstance may hack terribly at the tree of individual nature, and some will stand and some will not. There's no knowing.

A STAPLE of conversation among prostitutes is the kinkies. You can see the ads in Soho shop windows: *Miss du Sade, Miss du Cane, Miss de Belting* (flagellation). Ladies' black macintosh for sale. Boots, high-heeled shoes, plastic raincoats for sale, all with the girl inside them, of course. Miss *Kiki* This or *Kiki* That (anything). *Fifi*, or *Froufou*, gives French lessons, recently back from France, French and English conversation.... When the "normal citizen" reads or hears kink stories (or goes to Genet's plays) he is tempted to consider them as myths. Or, he will think it all old hat; it is all in Krafft-Ebbing, and that is where it ought to stay. But it is absolutely central to the prostitute's life that she is engaged day after day in realising the myths, in enacting the hopeless, silly dream. These are not amazing, disgusting, or funny stories to her; they are her work, her day-by-day tangible work, as dressing wounds is to a hospital nurse, for which she is paid.

Well, as for kinkies, it depends how I'm feeling. If I'm feeling cheeky, all right and good luck to them. But you can't do it every day. Client came to me one night and offered me three quid for three. Fine, said I. So he got into the drag; had it with him in a suitcase, and for me too. Black nylons, high wedge shoes and all. He said he was a servant girl called Millie and I was his mistress. They often want that, you know. I had to say: "Where were you last night, Millie?" And he said he'd been out with a boy. And I had to say: "Now it was clearly understood between us when you came to work for me that you were to be a good girl, Millie, and there was to be none of that." He was licking my shoes all the time. "And I think you deserve a beating, don't you, Millie?" "Oh yes, Madam, I do, I do!" So then I gave him the three he'd paid for. But I don't know what it was; I was just feeling like it, I suppose, but I suddenly lost my temper, oh, not only with him, with everything and everybody. So I gave him four more and took another four pounds off him and chucked him out. I really lit into him. He loved it. And yet people ask me why I like cats.

I heard kink stories of such majestic oddness that it was hard to believe in their actual truth, although circumstantial details sometimes force one to.

A client took me back to his place, and as soon as I got in the door there was a dirty great coffin standing open. He put me in a white nightie with a rosary in one hand and a Bible in the other and a wreath of roses on my head. Then I had to lie down in the coffin. I thought: "Is this

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a gag to get my money?" But no, I had my bag in with me. Then he started nailing the lid down, and all the time he was shouting out: "You're dead now, God damn you to hell!" He'd told me his wife had died. He'd given me a big spanner to knock the lid up again, but I tell you I was wondering if I'd ever get out. I did, though, and when I looked round the place, he'd gone.

Most kinkies are over forty, and the girls incline to a theory of association in seeking to explain how they get like that.

•

As I said, there are social gradations in the game. Two pounds down the Bayswater Road, three in Park Lane, four in Bond Street, three again in Shepherd Market and Stafford Street. Better in Wardour Street than in Lisle Street or Compton Street. Low again in the Commercial Road, Cable Street, and Cannon Street Row, down in Stepney. Low round Waterloo, Victoria down to Pimlico, Paddington, Euston, King's Cross. No fixed traditions round the suburban commons (Clapham, Putney Heath, Finsbury Park) or in the incipient trade along the arterial roads in the outer suburbs, like the A40 at Hillingdon. In the outlying places it is often West End girls having a change.

But once off the street and among the call-girls, you are in a different world. Take the word *whore*. The street-girls use it quite naturally; it is the simplest and the obvious word for what they are. The phrase, almost a signature tune, "Whoring it along the 'Dilly," has a fine generous ring to it. An occasional highbrow tart who quotes Auden and keeps up with the sexual oddities of the eminent will use the word about herself with a conscious, open-eyed feeling, in the same way that Bernard Shaw used to call himself "an old entertainer." But the average call-girl uses it to imply all that she is not. She uses it as synonymous with *slack*, which is the call-girls' word for a street-girl.

I don't look like one, do I? You wouldn't ever know, would you? Not ever? Would you? Would you?

The call-girl is tremendously nice. Her flat where she lives and her gaff where she works, if she has a separate place, are spotless; dusted, loved, every ornament balanced by eye against the others; shiny, warm, welcoming. The taste will be contemporary, very much aware of fashion, but not necessarily intelligent.

The first thing you must realise is that I'm not a whore. I have my friends, but I don't take anybody. Like for instance if a man rings up and says he's been given my number by so-and-so, I don't just leave it at that. I put him through it. When did you last see so-and-so? How was he? Where did you meet? Has he shaved his beard off? He said he was going to. Oh, there are all sorts of ways to find out if they're on the square. All right, then he comes round. Maybe I don't like the look of him. "Ooooh, I'm sorry; it's really too bad. She's just gone out. Would you believe it; isn't that just too bad." And even afterwards, after we've been to bed, if I haven't liked him I tell him I'm going off the game, or I'm going away on holiday. He'd better not come again.

You know, half my work's what we call social work. That is, say some friend of mine has someone come to London to visit his firm, and he gives him my number. I have connections with a lot of good firms; advertising businesses most of them. All right, he takes me out; dinner, a show, perhaps a party. Often a party, really, because then I go down on the expense account as prestige or promotion or whatever it is. It may lead to sex, it may not. Often it doesn't. I don't mind. In fact I'm glad.

Again:

It's a hell of a life. You know, I imagine the slack is afraid of disease, and afraid of the sex maniac who thinks it'd be fun to strangle her. Well, that's not what we're afraid of. The trouble in this game is when you're afraid of slipping. Some days you sit and sit by the telephone, smoking and smoking, and nobody rings, and you think—Look out, kid, you're slipping. What have I done? WHAT HAVE I DONE? *Are they telling each other I'm no good?*

A LONDON prostitute in the prime of life, then, is something like this. Of course she comes in all colours and shapes of temperament, but there is enough in common to make it worth saying something about the not so obvious ways in which she differs from other women. She has no sense of time, because her life is without routine. Time is divided into day and night, and that's all. She has a sense of obligation, but it is shakier than other people's. It works in an immediate way, because she is used to payment on the spot. If she says she will meet you somewhere in half an hour, she will. To-morrow, or next Tuesday, is another matter. If you take her

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to a public place, say a restaurant, she is a little awkward and embarrassed, or by contraries flamboyant, going in and out; everybody is looking at her, but can they tell? Once settled, she relaxes at once. She is an excellent listener; interested, amused, sympathetic. Listening, next only to sex, is what she does most of in her work. Her own favourite topics are the wealth and eminence of her clients, the sexual hypocrisy of our culture, kink stories, money, clothes, interior decoration, bars, coffee-bars, night-clubs. She prefers the pageant of life to vicarious involvement through the arts, but she is blind to politics and the organisation of society in general. She notices and comments on the women round her more than the men, partly out of straight lesbian interest, and partly because she is comparing herself to this mysterious competitor, the Wife. She is probably a fairly heavy drinker. When she is watching her words and thinking what to say next she will tell you she went on the game with a conscious decision, "for the pelt." She saw a way of multiplying her earnings tenfold, made up her mind, and did so. She continues on it because it's interesting, and she's used to it. I never heard one say it was satisfying. When she is quite relaxed, and talking without care or discretion, the picture changes. She drifted into the game; very often she will make out that she hardly noticed how or when. This may be perfectly true, or it may be that she noticed all too well and is denying and suppressing the memory.

Here is a story I heard from a man:

I met this girl at a party one night; she'd been sleeping around for some time with all sorts of men. I gave her a lift home afterwards, and as she was getting out of the car I asked her to have dinner with me a day or two later. She kind of paused, and then she said: "Look, that dinner's going to cost you about three pounds. Why don't you just give me the three pounds and come along in and do me now?" So I did.

In that story you can hear the penny dropping with a clear chink.

To revert; she is afraid, as all outlaws are. She is afraid of disease, more so perhaps than is any longer justified since penicillin, but there is still the fear of infecting a client's wife, or even her unborn child, a running fear which can never be either confirmed or laid. She is afraid of the sex maniac who may want to kill her—there were two murders like this while I was working on this article—and it is for this reason that she may keep a dog, or, if she can afford it, a maid. If she has no ponce,* she may take care to live in a house where the neighbours will accept her and her occupation, so that she can shout for them in an emergency. If she is a street-girl, she is afraid of being nicked; however often it happens—and Mrs. Wilkinson mentions a Belgian woman who was arrested 219 times—the appearance at Marlborough Street is always a humiliation. Now, since the Government announced the new Bill, she is afraid of prison. Whether she will be so much afraid that she will leave the streets and become a call-girl remains to be seen. I believe she will.

Above all, whether she walks the streets or answers the telephone, she is afraid of old age. It is when you approach this topic of *getting out* that your heart really sinks. It is almost impossible. The older whore will say quite simply: "There is no way out." The younger ones will keep their chins up and pretend to themselves that they're not like the rest. Nobody ever went into the game for keeps.

Of course, I'm only in it for five years.
For a few years.
Until I've something put by.
Until I'm bored with it.
For five years.
For five years. I've got it all worked out. Then I'll....
Buy a shop.
Go into partnership with a friend who has a garage.
Buy house property and let rooms.
Buy a coffee-bar.
Buy a restaurant.
Club together with one or two other girls and buy a hotel.
Get some old sucker to marry me.
Put my savings into....Put my savings into. ...Put my savings into....

It makes you weep, because not one in a hundred can save. The ability to save goes only with the retentive personality, with foresight, caution, affective momentum, deep and even narrow feelings. The whore is all on the surface; mercurial, short-sighted, chaotic, clitoral, or even wholly frigid.

What usually happens is that they go on and

* In current English usage (as opposed to American), a *ponce* is a man who lives on a prostitute's earnings; he is the French *souteneur* or *mec*. A *pimp*, on the other hand, is a prostitute's procurer. "You want a nice girl?" There are plenty of ponces in London now, but hardly any who make a living by pimping.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on, into their fifties and even sixties. They pass downward into a class called *four-to-sixers*, who go on the streets before dawn when the clients are too drunk to notice their age. Some become maids to younger women, which is perhaps the happiest conclusion. Then there is a saying: "End up drinking red biddy in the docks."

The elderly whore, the old-timer, often has delusions of social grandeur. She has missed the few possible escape lines, and gets attached in the half-light of unreality to the idea of what she might have been. She cannot deny what she is, so she may sideslip into denying that she is something else which she is. If she is Jewish, she may take pleasure in proving that she is not, and looking down on the Jewish client. If she is poor she may try to prove that she is rich, if Irish, English, and over and over again if she is dark, she will pretend to be fair. Conversely, she may try to prove that the innocent little woman in the flat upstairs is a whore.

One of these old-timers asked me to tea the other day. I went along, and there was just her and me. She poured out the tea with her little finger crooked and told me how she'd been invited to Buckingham Palace. Afterwards she entertained me by playing Gounod's Ave Maria *on the piano.*

THE fascination that crime in general and prostitution in particular have for certain highly educated young people with plenty of money is perhaps partly to be explained by the "lady" wishing to be a whore just as the whore may wish to be a "lady." Some will go so far as to do it. But it is also to be explained by the uncertain aim of impatient generosity which may rush not so much to rescue the victim of oppression as to fraternise with the merely unfamiliar. Then, too, there is the "mystery of the inferior" (for an analysis of which see Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe*, and Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*).

Some whores do get married, or set up what is meant to be a permanent liaison with a man. He may be a former customer or not. If he does not even know what his wife has been, the situation is of course emotionally hopeless. If he does, it may last, conceivably. But it's difficult. If a woman is capable of sustaining a regular relationship, why didn't she do it at first instead of going on the game? They usually come back, the ones who marry, not because of the attractions of whoring, but because the marriages don't work. When they do come back, they are welcomed with open arms; their return justifies all the others.

I know one girl who has got out. She has done it in the most favourable circumstances; she is young and intelligent, she loves her husband, and he loves her. He knows what she was. But, even so, it is little less than a heroic enterprise. Wherever they go together, street, pub, parties, job-hunting, home-hunting, the slightest flicker of attention, of interest, from some man will bring back that which has to be trodden underfoot. The man may simply be thinking: "Now where have I seen that girl before?" It may even have been in a cinema queue. But she knows that her husband will not know where it was.... If anything goes wrong—some people who were coming to dinner cry off at the last minute, a job falls through—have they found out? There is no defence against the suspicion. Laughter at one's own groundless suspicions is about the most mirthless kind there is.

That is what the woman who gets out has to face with other people. What she has to face in bed with her husband is easily enough imagined. It can be done, and it is done; but it's no wonder that it is not often done.

The way off the street is feet first.

IN THE Parliamentary debate on the Wolfenden Report, Mr. Butler promised stiffer penalties against living on immoral earnings as a "consolation." It was not clear what for. Mr. Edwards, the Member for Stepney, a prostitute area, described ponces as: "the dirtiest, filthiest lot in creation." Dr. Reginald Bennett spoke of "monarchs of the industry." Until 1948, convicted ponces could be flogged, and the criminal law still discriminates against them in two quite exceptional ways. It denies them the right to trial by jury; the magistrate can send them up, and the prosecution can ask that they be sent up, but the defence cannot (1898). It also places the onus of proof on them; if a man is proved to be "habitually in the company of a known prostitute," then it is up to him to prove that he is not living on her earnings (1912). How often in the recent discussions has one not seen someone writing to the papers saying this or that about the prostitutes themselves and ending up: "...and reserve the really heavy penalties for the ruffians who batten on these unfortunate girls"?

The very word *ponce* suggests *pounce*; fifty

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

years ago ponces were called *bullies*, which sounds even fiercer. Assuming that you come new to this topic, try consulting your own feelings about the ponce. There he is, this unspeakably debased male, lurking in the shadows of doorways and pouncing on his unsuspecting (or at best hypnotised) prey, tearing her hard-earned three pounds out of her pathetic clutch, and roaring away in his Ford Zodiac to the next girl, whom he threatens with a razor. He spends the night going round twenty or thirty of his hundred and fifty girls, or perhaps his section of the big syndicate administered by his super-boss, slashing his rivals, doling out shots to the junkies, coshing a client or two, and squaring four or five detective inspectors. Towards dawn he goes, surrounded by henchmen, to the girl he has chosen for himself that night and, little recking that her flaccid flesh is still reeking from the forty or fifty slavering lechers who have been before him, enjoys her.

None of the girls I met had ever had a proper ponce, though some had tried a candidate for a few days and then chucked him out. They regretted this, and wished they could be lucky enough to find a good one. One, rather drunk, even thought it would be a good plan if I took this on in my spare time. She needed someone to kick her out on the street when it was time, to make sure she had the rent ready on rent day, to keep her off the bottle, to tell her what clothes she looked nice in, and, perhaps most important of all, to help her see if she couldn't have some sort of a sex-life of her own. She thought that with a "sixty minute man" things might happen.

The ponce—in London to-day: always with that reservation—is neither more nor less than the whore's husband. He provides stability for her, a bit of discipline, someone to listen to her adventures. He makes love to her as much for her sake as for his own, and takes trouble over it. He is also a gauge of her prestige. If she keeps him well in hand-made shoes and black silk shirts, then her credit goes up among the whores, and his among the ponces.

Mine's a good earner. Just look at this shirt.

Economically, he corresponds to the wife of the normal citizen. But the fact that he is living on her earnings and not she on his is only of secondary importance to either of them. It may arise like this. A man is earning twelve pounds a week, and he takes up with a girl who is earning a hundred. His self-respect may lead him to keep his own job on for a bit but then one day she is ill, or her child is ill, or perhaps she is picked up and he wants to go to court with her. He stays off work and loses his job. Their earnings drop from a hundred and twelve a week to a hundred. So what the hell? He's a ponce; all right, so he's a ponce. There are plenty of others.

Mrs. Wilkinson published figures showing that about forty per cent of those *convicted* of poncing have also been convicted of other crimes. It cannot, of course, be known what proportion of ponces are never convicted either of poncing or of anything else. But the street-girl is herself technically a criminal—we make her one with our laws—and she develops a modified form of the criminal personality. It is not surprising that she takes up with criminals for company. Moreover, minorities against whom the majority discriminates will also seek each other out, and this is the main reason for the disproportionate number of Negroes among the ponces, which is a certain fact in New York and is widely believed to be a fact here too.

I used to live in Knightsbridge when I first went on the game. It was horrible. I didn't seem to be real; it was as if no one could see me. But since I moved over here among the coloured people I'm—well, you know—I feel kind of at home. I don't have to pretend any more.

Some whores share a ponce with another, or even with two others. This arrangement, which is the rule in New York, is the exception in London. It does not arise because the ponce is able to subject two or three silly but reluctant women for his own gain. It arises because in the world of prostitution—as in all other minority worlds which are at once defined and discriminated against by the majority world, like the criminal world proper, the Negro world, the world of the arts, and, in former days, the worse-off working class—in such worlds monogamy is not the rule. Add to this that in the world of prostitution chastity is by definition something which does not come in, and that many whores are at least a bit lesbian, and the multiple ponce become comprehensible.

Then there are the call-house madams or switchbawds. These are women with a two- or three-bedroom flat and a list of twenty or thirty telephone numbers. The client rings and gives his order; she calls the most suitable girl, and he meets her at the flat. He pays the madam, and the madam passes on a proportion

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the girl, always alleged by the girl to be too small. Or the madam allows the client to go to the girl's flat, and the girl passes on the rake-off. The call-house madam is just as criminal as the male ponce, but society is not somehow so angry with her. After all, she's a woman, she's probably a superannuated whore herself, and women are never so frightening anyhow.

A FULL-SCALE racket for the exploitation of prostitution is a rare event in twentieth-century London, but it does sometimes happen. When it does, it may go like this. The organiser may buy the best girls out of the legal brothels of France, Belgium, and Italy (which are for the most part now closed) and bring them to London. This is of course a white slave traffic, and sounds terrible; but for the girls themselves it has been, at certain times, a merciful deliverance. In the licensed houses of the Continent they would have been taking up to fifty men a day and getting anything down to a shilling a go for it. How they got there is another matter, but once they were there, anyone who was prepared to get them out again would look more like a St. George than a Bluebeard. To come to London was every girl's dream. In London they would perhaps be set up two by two in shared flats and provided with gaffs elsewhere to work in. They might even be run on Service lines, and pay over their entire earnings each week, receiving only spending money. What was left after the organisation rake-off would be banked for them in deposit accounts. They would be supplied with an issue of the most destructible clothing, nylons and so on, and with food, and a bottle of wine a day would be sent to their living flats. The organiser or one of his agents would inspect the pitches nightly to see that standards of dress and deportment were satisfactory. Other girls would be allowed to pitch there too, provided they reached these standards; if they did not, they would be hustled off by the organisation girls themselves. If any girl earned outstandingly well, she might be given a bonus in kind, typically a mink coat. Free weekly medical examination, free hospital treatment, a free return ticket home each year. In a very tight organisation of this sort, it would be most unlikely that any of the whores' savings would be released to them until they were judged unemployable. When they were, however, the savings would probably be honestly handed over.

This sort of organisation flourished only among imported foreign whores, and the English whores tended to look at it all between envy and contempt; envy for the safety and regularity, and contempt for the discipline and spoonfeeding. This is the same mixture of feelings that the English whore has always had for the idea of licensed brothels, and the appearance of large-scale organisations in London may in one sense be regarded as an alien tissue-graft on our culture. It does not commonly prove viable.

Apart from these rare occurrences of an alien pattern, allegations that so-and-so is "running a string of girls" generally turn out to mean only that he is giving them a cut-rate on his string of taxis, or that he lets rooms to them, but in no sense controls them. The Wolfenden Report recognised this.

So why are we so hot against the ponce? Partly for historical reasons. In the 19th century the "white slave traffic" was still a reality in London, and the brutal exploitation of under-educated and underfed girls was still possible. I have noticed that the attitude of respectable women to the ponce depends on their ages; the older women were brought up by mothers who in *their* youth really did have to watch their step when a handsome stranger offered to help them cross the road. But to get nearer the heart of our aversion to the ponce we must first ask ourselves what we feel about the whore herself. We are all in touch with her, or in touch with her image in our minds. She has been around for millennia. Every man has thought of going to her, even if he hasn't been. Every woman has thought of her husband or son going to her. It is enough to ask yourself, if you are a man, or your closest man if you are a woman, under what circumstances you would go to her. You go to her when you want a woman. But if there was a woman by you who loved you, why should you go to a whore? Even if there was a woman by you who did not love you but was sexually synchronous, why should you go? Even if she were a complete stranger, at a party, say, and you did not know whether it was going to be good or not, you would still probably not prefer a whore, because if you did you would be paying for the certainty of pretence instead of taking the chance of reality free. By now we are pretty low down on the scale, if a complete stranger at a party is preferable; we are pretty far away from love. I think the only circumstances in which a man who has experi-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enced love, even casually and generously in friendship, could go to a whore would be if he was completely alone in a foreign city and had the most terrible stone-ache. (Either that, or else if he just *liked* pretence.)

But age? What about the old man, not handsome, got a pot, and his wife's dead, or past it. He may have experienced love in the greatest fullness, and yet turn to a whore now. The present study which Dr. Gibbens is making of clients may show that this happens, or it may show that such elderly men have in fact gone to whores all their lives.

So, who does go? "Kinkies," first. Men who are only pleased if they're allowed to dress up as this or that, or use the cat, or throw cream buns about; men who have associated the experience of orgasm with something which most people find quite irrelevant to it.

Then the physically deformed; not directly because they are deformed, but because the shyness born of deformity may have prevented them ever learning the experience of love. If the whore has a useful social function, as many people say she has, it is with the kinkies and the deformed.

Then there are the men who want to avoid trouble and complication, who simply want the "sneeze in the loins" without responsibility, emotional contact, give and take, or indeed any involvement whatever; the duckers.

They know I'm *not going to ring up and tell them I'm lonely, or write them long letters, or go whining to them with this or that.*

Lastly, there are all the men, all the millions of men in England, who believe, who feel, that sex is something apart from the society they live in. They may be simply burning to do this or that and daren't ask their wives. They may be unmarried, and terrified at the thought of having a mistress. They may quite simply never have found out that women are capable of orgasm too. All these will fetch up with the whores, because they have been twisted out of sight of their own natures by the puritan society they grew up in. If once you get to believe that sex is something separable, and even more if you believe it's degrading, regrettable, unmentionable, something you wish to spare a refined woman, then there's not much reason why you shouldn't buy it. And if you've never found out that women come too, you may find the whore's pretence quite irresistible, and it may make you feel the hell of a fellow. She hopes it will.

And so back to the ponce. The whore has done her little turn and she has been paid for it. It doesn't cross the client's mind that he could have something more exciting and satisfying with a real girl if he got up and took it, so he doesn't worry too much about the money. But the thought that the first thing the whore does when his back's turned is to hand that money over to someone else, and that someone a man, and that man having her for free, and for all you know sneering with her at your peculiarities—why, it's absolutely revolting. It makes you bust with rage. If ever you laid hands on such a man, you'd beat the life out of him—because he is living proof that what you've had was counterfeit. He is your disillusionment. Into prison with him, and let the illusions flourish. And if two years isn't enough, let him have five, and that will be some consolation to us all.

IN (unpublished) evidence for the Wolfenden Committee Mrs. Wilkinson wrote (and kindly allows me to quote):

The society formed by prostitutes and their associates, though not hereditary, is continuous; it has a fairly permanent structure and composition; its stability depends on its nature as a counter-society. It exists because it absorbs a-social or anti-social personalities; it is economically dependent on the expression of an anti-social tendency in members of ordinary society. Its cohesion is strengthened by the attitudes of the general public towards the prostitute, her guilt feelings which prevent her return to ordinary life by causing her to exaggerate and anticipate critical attitudes towards her, and by attitudes within the society itself towards its members who try to break away.

I don't think this could be improved on. The whore world is like a little gearwheel engaged with a big one; it goes round faster, and in the opposite direction. You can see the gears engaging on the pavements of Piccadilly; the whores stand still and the men pour past, looking, considering, pausing to haggle, passing on to the next. The counter-society or underworld is, like the society or overworld which has expressed it from its own body, class-ridden, intolerant, but free from oppression. As to the rest of us, we cherish and pay it with one hand and belabour it with the other. That's how it gets like it is. The overworld sees the whore as a social problem or a social service, according to the amount of use it makes of her. The whore judges the overworld by what she sees. First, she sees the client, whom she holds in contempt for his gulli-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bility and in respect for his purse. Through him she sees his wife who, he inevitably tells her, is cold. To the English whore, England is a country of women as frigid as she is, or frigider, but who don't even try to pretend.

Ask me, the only difference between me and some of these wives is that they don't keep the bargain and I do.

Once when a call-girl was splashing scent about behind her ears, I said: "That's nice." "Want some?" she said, and sprayed my mouth with it. The point was *on the kisser*. This was the mark of the underworld which I was to take back to my presumably frigid wife.

If you read Judge Murtagh's account of the medical examination to which New York whores are subjected when they are sent to prison, you get an impression of a ritual rape of the whore by society, a symbolic indignity to which she is subjected when she falls into the power of the big wheel.

And here in London you see the two wheels engaged above all in the Magistrates' Courts at the regular conviction for soliciting. This conviction is popularly supposed to be fortnightly, but is not necessarily so; I met street-girls who had not been arrested for more than a year. The fortnight is a minimum gap; the Police act on a tacit understanding that more than once a fortnight is too often. When the conviction does come round, its forms are those of the criminal law, but its effect is fiscal. Two pounds down, and out you go till next payment day. If a whore is arrested with no money on her, it is well understood by the Police that, after she has been charged, she must be let go to earn the money for next day's fine. There is, of course, no medical examination. The thing is a tax collected at random.

THOUGH the whore-world is "continuous," as Mrs. Wilkinson says, it is not exactly the same as it always was.

Aren't any of you girls ambitious for anything beyond money?
Like what, for instance?
Like power? Politics?
Oh gosh, no! Look what happened to that Nitribitt girl in Germany.

She was murdered.

The courtesan, the *alta cortigiana*, is as far as I can discover completely lacking from the scene. When a floozy gets into the upper reaches of society she almost always marries her men one after the other. This is no good in politics, because one divorce is about all a politician can permit his wife to have behind her at the moment. The floozy is consequently backtracked into the world of the gossip-columns, which is without power.

There are also now several smaller worlds which mitigate the former raw dependency of the majority society on prostitution, one could think of the relationship as a ball-bearing. For instance, there are "the scrubbers"; very young girls who follow jazz bands round the country on their tours.

She's scrubbing with the Piddle Valley Stompers now, isn't she?

These girls ought to be studied soon by some social anthropologist. They compete for the favours of the musicians, and when they get a good scalp they chalk it up with a lipstick circle on their breasts. Predatory ritual. What happens to them later?

There are the girls I call the bums-with-clean-faces. They frequent pubs in the Fulham Road and King's Road, and correspond in the middle class to the Stepney café-floaters. Go anywhere, do anything sexually or touristically interesting. County Dublin, Positano, Ibiza, Tangier.

There are the telly aspirants, the advertising executive aspirants, the promotional expense-account aspirants, the screen and stage aspirants, all of whom overlap with the call-girls on the one hand and the bums-with-clean-faces on the other. There will soon be the scandal-mag stool-pigeons, as in America; girls who get in the way of the newsworthy personality, get laid, and then report back to the editor. There are even still some of the detective agency girls, who will go to Brighton or Paris with a man who wants to give his wife grounds for divorce, and then get discovered in moderately flagrante delicto by the detective, perhaps their uncle.

Husband seeking divorce: "Aren't you warm in here, my dear? Wouldn't you like to take your coat off?"
Detective agency girl: "Oh, I can't; I've got no dress on. You see, we have to be ready to get caught at a moment's notice."

And on the game itself, the specialist varieties are endless. There are motherly whores with glasses, nymphet whores, pregnant whores, Negro whores, Indian and Arab, Chinese and other East Asian whores; fat, thin; rowdy, prim;

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mannish, dowdy, brilliant. Judge Murtagh tells of a New York whore who underwent a sterilisation operation—it cost her seven hundred dollars—because like that she wouldn't ever have to bother with contraceptives and so could pretend to be seduced every time against her will, and thus build up the egos of clients who were escaping from their dominating wives. All these meet the demand of some man whose need has been conditioned into this or that idiosyncrasy by his experience in the majority society, in the overworld.

WELL, that's prostitution, known to the whores as The Game. It is a game, too; it is a market in illusion, a shop window like the ones in Holborn where you can buy bits of rubber that looks like poached eggs. It's a market where you can buy grunts and groans that are supposed to sound like love. That's all. In the last resort, the client is having his own money.

We in England can do what we like about it in the way of raising or lowering penalties for soliciting and poncing; we can sweep it under the carpet, or up the chimney if we like; it will certainly continue in some form or other. Before we can hope to understand the causes, we must learn to treat that pleasant, beautiful, interesting, and useful faculty all men and women have for sex in the same way that we treat our other important faculties, like learning, work, and prayer; by welcoming it, enjoying it, studying it, and talking about it without constraint, without "reverence," without botanising, and in English. To do otherwise, as we do now, is to deny our own origins, and thus to deny ourselves. The silences and circumlocutions of denial do not go unheard—nothing ever does—and each child which doubts its own origin and the pleasure and beauty which was in its origin doubts also its own humanity. From this deep doubt to the shallow counter-affirmation of whoring is not far.

I shall take for colophon something said to me by a girl of twenty who was brought up in a part of London where whoring is part of the everyday scene. Her friends who are whores and ponces are often on at her to go on the game; so this was not something she learned at her mother's knee but something she had to find out for herself against constant pressure the other way.

I don't see how you can, do you? Not if you know what love is.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hwang Soon Won

Shower

THE boy stood by the stream and saw the girl and placed her as old Yun's great-granddaughter. She had both hands playfully in the running water, as if she had never seen such a clear stream.

For several days now she had been playing by the water on her way home from school, and until yesterday she did her water-stirring by the bank. To-day she was squatting on one of the stepping stones in mid-stream.

The boy decided to sit down on the bank to wait for her to return. Soon a farmer happened by and she stood up to make way for him to cross the stream. The boy crossed over too.

* * *

The next day he came to the bank a little later and there she was at the same rock, washing her face. She was wearing a pink sweater, both sleeves rolled up, and her wrists and the nape of her neck were a glistening white.

Washing done, she looked intently into the running water, at her reflection, no doubt. She scooped water up—oh, that must be a tiny fish she has spotted.

This story, which has been translated from the Korean by Yu E. Sang, won a prize in our recent Authors' and Translators' Story Competition (organised in association with International P.E.N.). Hwang Soon Won is a Professor in the Department of Literature, Sinhung University, Seoul, and a Member of the Korean Academy. He is author of several novels and collections of stories and poems.

Perhaps she noticed him on the bank, perhaps not. She just went on scooping up the water, absorbed in her game, and apparently not budging unless someone came by.

Now she picked something up out of the water: a white pebble. She jumped to her feet, started to hop across the stones to the other side. One step short of the bank she turned back: "Oh, silly boy!" and the pebble came flying towards him.

He started up. Her pigtail flapping on the back of her head, she made a dash for the reed bushes. The reed tops swished silkily in the autumn sunlight.

She could only come out over there at the other end of the reed bushes. Quite a while, but no sign of her yet. He tip-toed, then a wisp of reed tops stirred, and she was back in sight with an armful of reed tuft, walking away leisurely. The bright sun was on the tassels that rose high over the girl's head and it looked as if a tuft, not a girl, was slowly moving down the path.

He kept on standing there until the reed tuft was out of sight. Then he looked down and saw the pebble she hurled at him. It was almost dry now. He picked it up, put it into his pocket.

The next day he came out to the bank much later. She was nowhere to be seen, and it was a relief. She was not there the next day, or the next. As days went by without her showing up at the stream, a strange emptiness began to form deep down inside the boy, and with this, a habit of reaching down to finger the pebble in the pocket.

One day he tried to squat on the stepping-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stone where she used to play with the water. He dipped his hands in. He washed his face. He, too, looked into the water. The water's surface mirrored his dark tanned features. He cupped his hands and tried to scoop the image up. Then he started to his feet. Wasn't she coming his way across the stream?

She must have been watching him, hiding. The boy started to run. One foot missed the stone, and there was a splash. He ran on, unmindful of the wet foot.

A quick look around, but there was nowhere to hide on this side, not even a small reed bush: only several buckwheat patches, too low. The smell of the flowers seemed to sting his nostrils. For a brief second he felt faint, then some lukewarm, salty liquid was on his tongue. His nose was bleeding.

He kept running. "Silly boy, silly boy!" seemed to tail him closely behind.

* * *

SATURDAY came.

When the boy reached the stream, there she was, again playing with the water. He negotiated the first stepping-stone, pretending she was not there. He watched his step across.

"Oh, you." He pretended not to hear and walked on to the other bank.

"Oh, boy, what is the name of this clam?"

He turned around in spite of himself. His eyes met hers, clear and dark-brown, and he shifted his eyes down to her palm.

"A silk clam."

"What a lovely name!"

The boy and the girl were now at the fork of the path. She had about three li to cover, he about ten, along separate paths.

"Ever been on the other side of that mountain over there?" She pointed to the far end of the plain.

"Oh, no."

"Why not go there together? I'm bored to death ever since we came to the country. Nobody to play with."

"That's a long way, you know. Farther than you think it is."

"Maybe, but it can't be too far for me. When I was going to school in Seoul we used to go long distances on trips, farther than that."

"Silly boy!" seemed to be right in her eyes, ready to come out aloud.

The boy and girl started along a narrow path between the paddies, past farmers cutting rice plants, the kind that ripens earlier. In the centre of the paddy stood a scarecrow. Several ropes reached from its supporting pole across the paddy to the stakes driven at intervals around the bank. The boy bent down, twitched one of the slack ropes, and a few sparrows flitted away. (Oh yes, I'd better get back early and chase the sparrows off the paddy near the house.)

"What fun!" She took hold of the rope herself, shook away, the scarecrow twitching at each pull. She saw another scarecrow in the next paddy and ran for it, and off he went after her (half deciding to drop the idea of sparrow-chasing or helping around the house).

The boy ran past and ahead of her. Grasshoppers kept bumping into his face, so many faint pricks. He felt the blue sky suddenly going in a whirl, dizzily, a blessed eagle circling round and round up there, that's what it was. The girl was busily jerking at the rope, shaking the scarecrow, which danced even better than the first one.

The paddies ended in a stream, where the dry field began, planted with soy-beans all the way up to the foot of the hills, farther ahead. The girl hopped over the stream, one step ahead. They walked by the bend of a bean patch, where bundles of threshed sorghum stalks stood in a shock.

"Oh, what is that over there?" She pointed to the thatched platform raised on four tall poles.

"A watchtower."

"How are the musk-melons here? Are they very sweet?"

"Of course they are, but the water-melons are best."

"I wish I had one right now."

He pulled up two of the radishes planted in a row around the patch, pinching the green tops off the still slender roots, and gave one to her. As if to show her how, he bit off the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

top and worked his thumbnail around the edge, peeling off the white skin.

She copied him, chewed a mouthful, then tossed the radish away. "How foul!"

"I can't eat it either. It isn't sweet at all." He threw his radish even farther away.

They were much closer to the mountain now. The flaming reds of the maple leaves were dazzling to their eyes. With a joyful shout, she dashed towards the foothill. The boy stayed behind, picking flowers.

"This one's chrysanthemum, this is a bush clover, and this one's a bellflower. . . ."

"I had no idea the bellflower is so lovely. Oh, I love this lavender . . . and what do you call this yellow one like a tiny umbrella?"

"Mat'ari."

She held it up as she would hold an umbrella, her cheeks a trifle flushed.

He picked another handful, sorted out more fresh ones, and handed them to the girl.

"But don't throw any away!" she ordered.

Down below from the ridge, a few thatched roofs were clustered together. The two sat side by side on a rock by the path. It seemed as if a quiet had descended all around. The autumn sun that still felt hot seemed to carry the smell of drying grass.

"What is the name of those flowers up there?" Her finger pointed to a small steep mound, coiled with kudzu vines, a few tardy pinkish-violet flowers peeping out from the clusters of pods, all sticking upwards.

"They're just like wisteria. There's wisteria in my school yard in Seoul, one of those trellised things. That flower reminds me of the girls I used to play with there."

Slowly she went over to the mound, and pulled at a vine with the most flower clusters. It didn't yield to her twisting, and she strained and slipped. Her hand snatched at a vine and held it.

The boy flew over, seized her outstretched hand, and pulled her up. He regretted that he hadn't offered to get the kudzu flowers for her.

He saw a scratch on her right kneecap, blood oozing through. He suddenly put his lips on the spot, started to suck it, and then leapt up and ran away.

He came running back, out of breath: "Put this on the wound! It will help." And he rubbed on some pine resin.

"You know, there is a calf over there. Let's go see it!"

It was a brown calf, so young it didn't have a nose-ring on as yet. He grabbed the rein close to its muzzle, scratched its back with the other hand, and he leaped up, landing astride its back. The calf started trotting around the stake to which it was tethered. The white face of the girl, her pink sweater, her dark blue skirt and her spray of wild flowers and all, suddenly blurred into one shimmering circle of colours. He was dizzy, but forced himself to stay on because he was so proud of his feat.

"Here, what are you kids up to?" The head of an old farmer emerged from a clump of sword grass. The boy slid off the back of the calf. The farmer surely would scold him for riding on a calf while its back was still tender.

But the man with a long beard only said, "Hurry back home, both of you, before the shower catches you."

THERE was a huge column of black raincloud coming overhead. Things were stirring. A gust of wind scudded through the bushes, rustling, then everything turned into a garish, violet colour.

The first raindrops came pattering down on the broad oak leaves as the boy and the girl passed over the crest of the hill. Down the slope, a big drop or two of chilly rain on his neck, then it came pouring in sheets, blocking out the view. Then a watchtower loomed ahead through the rain, a dry place. But it was in bad shape, with gullies in the thatch, posts a-tilt, the rain coming through almost as freely inside as out. He managed to find a dry spot for her to stand. Her lips had turned purple, her shoulders were shivering visibly. He took off his cotton jacket and put it around her. She looked up to him once, rain water dripping over her eyes, then began to sort out faded or broken flowers.

The roof began to leak on her, and the place was of no use as a shelter. He ran out

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to a nearby rick of sorghum stalks. He ran his hand into it to see if it was dry inside and picked up bundles of tall stalks to set them up on the outside for extra protection. He beckoned the girl.

Inside the rick there was no leak, but it was dark and there was hardly room for both of them. He stood out in the rain, and a mist of steam rose from his bare back.

The girl, almost in a whisper, asked him to come inside. She insisted, and he started to edge in cautiously. His back crushed the flowers she was holding, but she didn't mind. The sudden smell of sweat from his wet body surprised her. But she didn't turn away. Her trembling eased up somewhat from the warmth of his body.

The steady pattering on the sorghum blades stopped, it had grown lighter outside, and they stepped out of the gloom. Just ahead, on the plain, the sunlight was pouring down on a bright, glistening patch.

They walked up to a stream, but the turbid water was high and too wide for one jump.

He turned his back towards her, and without a word she allowed him to carry her over piggy-back. Water was coming half-way up to his thighs, when she, with a shriek, tightened her hold around his neck. Before he made the other side of the stream the sky was blue again without a speck of cloud lingering.

• • •

For days she had not been around. Every day he went out to the stream hoping to catch sight of her again, but she was nowhere to be seen.

He looked into the school-yard at playtime. He once peeped into the fifth-grade classroom for girls, but she wasn't there either.

Then one day, he walked towards the stream, his fingers busy with the white pebble, and there, there she was, squatting on the bank, this side of the stream.

"I've been ill." She looked pale and thinner.

"Because of that shower the other day?"

She nodded.

"Are you all right now?"

"Not quite yet."

"Why, then you ought to be in bed."

"But it's so boring staying home, and I came out. . . . What fun it was that day, though . . . I don't know where I got this. This spot doesn't seem to come off." She looked down at the front hem of her pink sweater.

A dark brown smudge, turning greyish. She looked up, and the flush was back on her cheeks. "Where do you suppose I got this?"

He kept staring.

"Yes, I know now. Remember, you carried me across the stream? This must've come from your back."

He felt the blood rushing to his face.

At the fork, she held out a handful of jujubes.

"By the way, this morning they picked some jujubes at home. They're going to use them in the sacrifice on the Moon Festival."

He hesitated.

"Come, have some! They're very sweet. They say my great-great-grandfather planted the tree."

He held out his cupped hands. "My, these are really big!"

"Do you know? We're going to let our house after the festival."

The boy had heard villagers talk about how the Yun family's business went badly in Seoul and how they had to wind it up tc come back here to their place in the country. It now appeared the family had to let out that house as well.

"I don't really know what it is all about, but I just hate moving. It's something the grown-ups do and I can't help it."

A sad look came into her eyes, something he had not seen before.

As he walked back home alone after parting, he mulled over the news. Somehow he failed to taste the sweetness of the jujube in his mouth. But after stealing over to the walnut grove belonging to Grandfather Toksoe, and filling his pockets with the best nuts in the whole village—which she would soon be tasting—he suddenly remembered. He forgot to tell her to come out again to the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stream before she left and as soon as she was well again. Silly boy! Silly boy!

WHEN he returned from school, on the eve of the Moon Festival, he saw his father dressed to go out, with a chicken in his hand.

"I wonder if this is big enough?"

Mother handed him a straw handbag. "She's been cackling for days now, looking for a place to sit. She may not be quite so big yet, but she's fat all right."

The boy turned to his mother and asked where his father was going.

"He's going over to the Yuns' and that chicken is for the offering on to-morrow's festival."

"Then why not take that big speckled rooster?"

Flustered, the boy threw down his bundle of books, went out to the barn, and spanked the rump of the bull with a bare palm as if to kill a fly.

* * *

THE water of the stream looked much clearer as the days became cooler. The boy came to the fork in the road, tried walking up the other path, stopped by the reed bushes and looked across towards the village where the girl lived. The village looked very close in the crystal air of autumn.

According to the grown-ups, her family was moving to-morrow to Yangpyong to run a small store. The boy fingered the walnuts in his pocket with one hand, and with the other mechanically lopped off reed tops.

Alone that night, he was still going over the news of the Yun family's move. He tried to decide whether he should go to the departure or not, and if so, would he be able to see her. . . .

He was half dozing off, when he heard a voice.

"What a thing to have happened!"

Father was back.

"My, the Yuns are in a bad way. They had to sell all the estates they had, and then the house they've lived in for generations. And now they had to have that young girl die on them. . . ."

There was only the light of the kerosene lamp, and threading her needle, mother said, "She was their only great-granddaughter, wasn't she?"

"Yes, they had two young grandsons but both died a long time ago."

"How unlucky they are with children!"

"That is just what I was going to say. She's been sick for some time, but I hear they could hardly get as much medicine for her as she needed. But, you know, she must've been a strange child. Believe it or not, just before she died, she said, 'When I die, please bury me in the clothes I'm wearing now.' "

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Simon Raven

Perish by the Sword

A Memoir of the Military Establishment

THE Sword is the emblem of military authority. Everyone in the Army has one, though the more important he is the more resplendent and generally impractical his sword will be. Private soldiers have bayonets—token swords, one might say, reminders of the immemorial origins of soldiering and what is even now the occasional necessity of killing face to face. Mounted troopers have crudely fashioned sabres. Regimental Serjeants-Major, being of some grandeur, have proper swords with ciphered hilts—shorter than Officers' swords, however, to remind the R.S.M. of his exact social status. Officers themselves have all kinds of sword: one kind in the Royal Regiment of Artillery, another in the Light Infantry, and claymores, of course, in the Highland Regiments; while General Officers have swords with unguarded ivory hilts, weapons of great beauty and value.

None of these, except for the common soldier's bayonet, ever appear now, save only on ceremonial occasions. But they are still there for all that, kept bright by batmen for the annual parade, worn for the photographs that will be sent to housemasters and mothers. For the sword is the symbol not only of might but of leadership and honour; it denotes the righteous anger of the silver knight who rides against Saladin, the purity of St. George, above all, perhaps, the brave words spoken at Agincourt.... So that every now and again the old order still goes out: "Officers will wear swords." It is accepted as a duty and a privilege. But who are the young men who run upstairs to instruct their servants, "To-morrow our swords must be bright—see to the sheaths and buckles"? What kind of man is he, in this year of grace 1959, who thinks to himself with pleasure as he prepares for bed, "To-morrow, like Hector or Achilles, I shall wear my Sword"?

I BOUGHT myself a sword, one afternoon in the spring of 1953, from Messrs. Wilkinson of Pall Mall. I had had a heavy luncheon and so chose a badly balanced one, which was subsequently about as much use as Excalibur for taking on parades. But that, of course, was not the point. For in a few weeks, having no money and nothing else to do, but anticipating travel and excitement and companionship, I was to rejoin the Army as a Regular Officer in the rank of Lieutenant. As such, I must clearly have a sword. I certainly took it with me everywhere, until, in the autumn of 1957, a series of regrettable and squalid misunderstandings, all entirely due to my own fault, compelled me to tender a very hasty resignation. Thus I served some four and a half years with the Colours—years upon which I look back with pleasure, affection, and even (except of course for the squalid misunderstandings) with pride. So while on the one hand these pages are based on experience in an army from which I was, for all practical purposes, expelled, on the other hand any bias I have is firmly in the Army's favour. (This lest anyone should think that the conclusions I shall later draw are the result of disgruntlement or spite.)

All of which brings me back to the spring of 1953, when I waited eagerly for the word to join the Regimental Depot of The King's Shropshire Light Infantry and meanwhile read *The Shropshire Lad* to put me in good trim.

I was at this time twenty-five years old, had taken a fair degree in Classics at King's College, Cambridge, had travelled a little in Europe, and

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

counted myself a man of culture and a man of the world. I had been in the immediately post-war Army before going to Cambridge, but that had been an affair of flux and confusion—a vast, sprawling mass, which was really nothing but an inefficient machine for getting itself demobilised. By 1953, however, things had presumably settled down. National Service had come firmly in to stay, with predictable schedules and properly timed periods of training. Regular Officers were again in the ascendant, the older ones having emerged from the indiscriminate war-time scrummage of acting and temporary ranks, the younger ones now appearing fresh from Sandhurst, where they took eighteen months instead of four to learn their business. Senior non-commissioned rank was by now confined almost entirely to long-service Regulars. Above all, I thought, there must surely by now be enough space and enough leisure for action to be dictated by thought and consideration instead of merely precipitated by the ill-informed nagging and abruptly exploding muddles typical of 1946. I should find, I told myself, organisation and professional method—an Army and no longer a rabble. Again, it was, they said, as far as its Officers were in question, a new kind of Army—different not only from that of 1939 to 1945 but also from that of before the war: no longer an Established club for Established people, or a useful repository for the slow-witted or superfluous members of Establishment families, but a new Army freed from the grip of social prejudice, in which only the meritorious could aspire to success or even to place. However this might be, it was a prospect full of interest, opportunity, and promise. The event was to confirm my superficial and optimistic predictions, and was indeed to redouble my interest; but such interest was to assume a distinctly sinister nature, and it is this which I hope to convey.

The first thing I was made to do on rejoining the Army was to attend a junior Officers' course at The School of Infantry at Warminster. This course was more properly intended for newly commissioned Officers straight from Sandhurst, and was designed to provide them with such basic and practical knowledge of tactics and administration as they would require to command a platoon of infantry in the field or to assume temporary command of a company—a duty which devolves on extremely junior people more often than might be thought. If it seems curious that, after eighteen months spent training as cadets, these young Officers should nevertheless require an immediate course in the most elementary techniques of their profession, I should explain that the training at Sandhurst is of an academic and very generalised nature. They say that a cadet leaves the R.M.A. with the "theoretical knowledge" needed to command a Division and with "practical experience" inadequate to dispose correctly of two men and a light machine gun. However this may be, no matter what branch of the Army he is to enter, every cadet receives—or did receive—the same general training; and it is only after he is commissioned that he is instructed in the immediate and specialised requirements of his own arm. One result of this is that young Officers, instead of proceeding immediately to active units where the normal makeshift arrangements of fallible humanity prevail, spend far too long in the sedate and perfected routines of Army "Schools" and "Institutions," where the instructors are smug and hand-picked and there are always enough blackboards. (This is never the case in an ordinary unit.) The young Officers are shielded too long from the irritations and "make do and mend" atmosphere of everyday soldiering. Still, there was a lot to be learned at Warminster, and it was certainly fitting that I, a university entrant who had not seen a rifle in five years, should find myself there as a student of the infantryman's basic and essential crafts.

While much of the training was inevitably designed to promote physical fitness, there was nevertheless a strongly held belief that an Officer, whether fit or not, should always have so much in the way of pride (or "guts") that he would never admit to physical inadequacy until he dropped dead or unconscious. This belief, a very significant one, was mystical both in its nature and intensity. During a crippling exercise at the end of the course two or three Officers fell out complaining of blisters or other mild indispositions. The Chief Instructor, himself a civilised and self-indulgent man, denounced them in round terms. An Officer, he said, simply could not and did not fall out. Will-power, if nothing else, should keep him going for ever. It was all a matter of "guts." There was an unspoken implication that, since other ranks could and did fall out, even though they were often physically tougher, the Officer belonged to a superior caste. I found it an accepted belief among Officers later on that they could perform physical feats or endure physical discomforts without it being in

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the least necessary for them to train or prepare for such things in the manner required of the private soldier. Officers, for example, just did not do P.T.: they did not need it; they were Officers and would endure to the very end, had they stepped straight on to the field from a sanatorium or a brothel.

How much, in the last resort, was thought to depend on superior qualities of morality and character! The military arts were given precise attention, but it was the catchwords with quasi-moral implications ("guts," "common-sense") that filled the air as the course went on. A Warminster virtue, too, was a peculiar brand of ***humour***. This was not the ability to see oneself and one's activities in a detached and ironical spirit—that would have been fatal. Humour meant being cheerful in the face of unpleasant circumstances, rallying the men's spirits by laughing with them over some slapstick incident, submitting "like a good sport" to an unjust punishment given to oneself by the Adjutant and "laughing about it afterwards in the Mess." This conception of humour (an obvious branch of "guts") was in fact discreetly designed to counteract or totally extinguish any tendencies towards an objective (or intellectual) humour that might contain tinges of satire or cynicism—for such a thing would have been detrimental to another highly prized virtue, that of ***enthusiasm***.

About enthusiasm I can hardly trust myself to speak. It seemed to mean a sort of blind, uncritical application to any task, however silly or futile, that the neurosis or panic of a superior might suddenly thrust upon one. Since one of the points of enthusiasm was that you started doing whatever it was straight away and without wasting time on questions, enthusiasm could involve a frantic expense of time and energy on some trifling project, wastefully because uncritically undertaken, abandoned half-way as irrationally as it was commenced. This, of course, was just what great soldiers of the past wished to avoid when they deplored the indiscriminate use of "zeal." Why zeal—condemned alike by von Clausewitz and Wellington—should now once again be thought desirable it is interesting to speculate. I suspect it is because a superior and analytical attitude is considered undemocratic; and that the influence of such people as Lord Montgomery has dictated a spirit, for junior Officers at least, of "mucking in" and "getting on with the job." The heartiness, not to say hysteria, implied by such expressions was of course distasteful to the more fastidious and sceptical Officers, for whose benefit yet another virtue, that of *loyalty*, had to be invoked. Loyalty meant that you were required, in the name of the Queen and the honour of the Regiment, to conceal any impatience or amusement you might feel when the demands on your enthusiasm became operatic, farcical, or just plainly impossible of fulfilment. Loyalty, in fact, was a conception often blatantly used to blackmail you into silence when you were faced with the incompetence, injustice, or sheer folly of a superior Officer.

Sociability was also highly esteemed at Warminster. This, like loyalty, *could* mean many good things, such as hospitality and the desire to please in social intercourse, but it also implied an unquestioning deference to the convenience and opinions of one's military superiors. That one should obey the orders of such superiors, or even be loyal to them during displays of professional vapidity, is perfectly reasonable; but I could never discover why one should be expected, in a purely social context, to receive as gospel wisdom their views on anything from body-line bowling to revealed religion. Normally politics and religion are eschewed in Officers' conversation; but grounds for controversy still remain, and I have never forgotten the trouble I got into for contradicting a General who announced that "sodomy had rotted the Roman Empire." The fact that this Officer scarcely knew a word of Latin and, by his own confession, had never read a line of Gibbon, was held to be irrelevant. The General had spoken.

"Courage under fire," a sort of distilled essence of "guts," could not exactly be taught, and so had to be taken for granted in all of us, who were tacitly and grimly assumed to possess it. Hence we can pass to a very much boosted commodity—*initiative*. This meant (subject to orders received and unquestioning enthusiasm in the face of these) that oneself must always be ready to devise and sponsor an original course of action. A valuable military quality, most certainly: but unfortunately in peace-time conditions, and even for the most part in war-time ones, communications are now so good and the opportunities for genuinely individual action so rare, that initiative tends to become a highly contrived thing artificially fostered to impress superiors. It becomes, in fact, mere interference with the existing order of things which, to give an excuse for showing keenness and interest, are made out to be in some respect "slack" or

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"unsatisfactory." A genuinely adventurous spirit is one thing, arbitrary exhibitions of officiousness are quite another; and the sort of person who was praised at Warminster for initiative generally turned out to be a meddlesome bully of the type who reports his best friend to his housemaster for immoral behaviour—thereby himself becoming head prefect in his friend's place. Such interference, I need hardly say, is also taken to show *responsibility*, which is the last of the great Warminster virtues.

Responsibility is in a way the pivot of the whole system. Like the Holy Ghost, it is supposed to be everywhere, and anything which is not material for the exercise of guts or enthusiasm (or one of the other Warminster qualities) will certainly turn out to be in the realm of responsibility. It covers everything from making an intelligent assessment of how to move a Division down to being careful not to get drunk in the Serjeants' Mess. It means not gambling for high stakes, not being late for parade, not sending reports to the Press, and not going to bed with your Company Commander's wife—however pressingly invited.

So much for the teaching at Warminster. Technical military method was competently and thoroughly dealt with, but it was all, in a manner, seen to be subordinate to and dependent upon the great moral and quasi-moral imperatives, which I have tried to describe above.

Who were the young men who received this instruction? Where did they come from? and in what state of education and maturity were they when, having just received the Queen's Commission, they came to the School of Infantry at Warminster?

I must remind the reader that all these boys were Infantry Officers. Probably cavalrymen are richer (and come in the main from better-established families), gunners are more or less on a par with infantrymen, while engineers and Officers of the more technical corps are, from the point of view of money or social class, the inferiors of the average young man I met at Warminster. Still, though it is only infantrymen I am writing about, the social range of infantry Regiments, from the Foot Guards to obscure Regiments of the Line, is very broad. The reader may therefore take it, when he considers what follows, that the Infantry, for the sociologist's purpose, is an accurate small-scale version of the Army as a whole.

There are for practical purposes three ways of obtaining a Regular Commission: directly from a university, by transition from a National Service Commission, and by completing the course at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. The latter method is by far the most common. Again, admission into Sandhurst is achieved in one of two ways: by passing an examination and a special board (the Regular Commissions Board) while still at school, or being strongly recommended while actually serving as an other rank and, once more, passing the Regular Commissions Board. For obvious reasons the former (and larger) class of boy tends to be younger, better educated, and more socially acceptable (from the average Officer's point of view).

As far as the Infantry is concerned, the correspondence between Regiments and certain educational scales is almost mathematically exact, for since the war and the hopeless confusion of social values the question of a boy's social suitability is assumed, for the sake of simplicity, to depend largely on the school he attended. The only other substantial consideration is the private means which some Regiments require their Officers to possess—this despite the objections of Socialist Ministers of War. Thus to join a Regiment of Foot Guards it is preferable to have been at Eton, Winchester, or Harrow, though one would be tolerated if one had been at another of the "big six" public, or one of the more reputable Roman Catholic, schools. It is also either essential or very desirable to have at least £150 a year of one's own. To go slightly downward in the scale, to be commissioned in one of the Rifle Regiments requires an almost similar educational status, though there is less direct emphasis on Eton, Harrow, and Winchester: again, the Rifle Regiments are said to worry less about private money, though some of the Officers are extremely rich. After this we descend to the Regiments of Light Infantry and Fusiliers. Here it is broadly true to say that, while it is almost essential to have been to a public school, it does not matter which. But, having been myself in The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, I well remember very harsh things being said when another Light Infantry Regiment accepted as Regulars two boys of aggressively grammar school origin.

After the Light Infantry and the Fusiliers, if we omit the Highland Regiments (which no Englishman in his right mind can begin to comprehend), we come to the absolutely plain run of Regiments of the Line. Such Regiments are

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

variable in calibre; but many of them are consciously and purposefully *middle class* in their methods of selection—almost preferring a boy from Oundle to a boy from Eton, and often regarding the possession of private means as unfair and even immoral. In such Regiments private tastes for drinking and gambling are closely watched; homosexuality which, though scarcely encouraged, is not uncommon in Regiments of a smarter and more worldly tone, would be considered profoundly shocking. (The degree of censorship passed on private morals is always a good indication of a Regiment's social status: in "Etonian" Regiments moral comment is seldom heard, whereas the further down the scale we go, the more grindingly insistent it becomes.) Obviously middle-class Regiments of this nature (quite apart from the fact that the supply of public school boys may by now be running low) are quite content to absorb grammar school boys of industrious character from "poor but moral homes." And so it falls out. In some ordinary Line Regiments as few as twenty per cent of the Officers may be grammar school boys; but in many others the figure is eighty per cent or even higher. No names, no pack-drill. I should add that the very few Jewish boys who go in for soldiering find it difficult to get into the "smarter" Regiments; and that boys from secondary technical schools, while they would undoubtedly be acceptable in Infantry Regiments of the poorer class, go mainly and very sensibly to technical Regiments—the Signals, R.E.M.E., etc. From all of which, two deductions are very plain. Though potential infantry officers from non-Established or only semi-Established circles are tolerated and indeed welcomed, they are nevertheless uncompromisingly denied admittance to the most glittering of the Establishment's *Salles Privées*. It is unthinkable that a grammar school boy should hold a Regular Commission in the Grenadier Guards, and that is that. Equally, however, there is no doubt that such a boy will easily be received into the dingier corners of the Establishment provided that he is of suitable material to be stamped with the imprimatur of that particular branch.

Now from all this a fairly plain pattern is beginning to emerge. Certain boys at public or secondary schools of every class get it into their heads that they want to be Officers. They pass an examination and they pass a Regular Commissions Board—this when they are about eighteen. Thus they are already "set apart." Some of them, even at this early stage, have already been accepted as future Officers in definite Regiments; others know pretty well for which Regiments their schools and pockets qualify them; even the poorest boys from the most obscure schools know that there is a whole ruck of perfectly adequate Regiments which require boys of keenness and good character, and that they have only to keep their noses clean to find a billet somewhere. They all have this in common—that they have *already* proved themselves fit, by qualifications of education and character, to hold Commissions and exercise command. They are cut out to give the orders. If they are still in any doubt about their "apartness," such doubt is speedily set at rest, the first day they join the Army, by the instant recognition of their potential officer status, and their consequent disposal in separate and superior squads. A few months later, having been the cherished centre-piece of a Regimental Depot, they proceed to Sandhurst.* They are now officer cadets; they are addressed as "Sir" by all non-commissioned ranks (though they themselves have to return this compliment to the more senior of such ranks); they carry nice little canes; they have a specially-designed uniform; some of them even have swords. Let us consider what happens to them now.

THE specifically military side of the cadets' education is a general introduction to the whole trade of soldiering, taught by highly qualified Officers of irreproachable private lives. There can be no doubt: a cadet who pays a modicum of attention can emerge from Sandhurst with a formidable knowledge of the disposition and administration of the British Army at all levels and in all its functions. The military teaching is a model of efficiency and comprehensiveness.

Again, I have nothing but praise for what I know of the academic side of Sandhurst education. This is conducted by university graduates who have taken high honours. There is a reasonable element of choice, and a pardonable tendency to get the cadets to concentrate on the physical sciences or modern languages. Admir-

* Since the time of which I write, there has been an alteration in procedure, whereby potential officers, instead of first going to Depots or Training Units, go straight to Sandhurst and serve their first few months there in a kind of "recruit sub-department" of the R.M.A. This hardly weakens my thesis.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

able results of a fairly liberal education were easily observed in the young men I met at Warminster; but such qualities in junior Officers did not always give unalloyed pleasure to older men, reared in the more Spartan pre-war Sandhurst tradition. The official theory (a product of the immediately post-war era) is that strict discipline and liberal education can complement and strengthen each other; in practice they are often plainly opposed, and serious friction between the civil and military instructors is not unknown. All of which brings us to the last and most interesting category of Sandhurst education—that which is concerned with "character and discipline," if you like with the "moral formation of the cadet." This practical type of character-building (Arnoldian in essence) is the staple of Sandhurst education.

The "prefect" system, I need hardly say, is almost viciously in evidence. There is in fact a complete cadet hierarchy which ranges from cadet Lance-Corporals to cadet Under Officers and which runs parallel to the hierarchy of real Officers and N.C.O.s actually on the instructing staff. Minor matters of discipline and administration are left to these cadet officials, and it is interesting to consider the powers they enjoy. Cadet N.C.O.s can bring charges against other cadets and the more officious are not slow to do so. A Senior Under Officer, who is of course no older than the boys he disciplines, is empowered to deal with such charges at his own "Orderly Room," at which he may inflict quite heavy punishments, in the form of extra drills, on minor offenders. Beyond the mere exercise of such concrete powers, Cadet N.C.O.s and particularly the Under Officers are charged with maintaining the "tone" of their own Company, and this opens up a vast realm of semi-official influence and interference. I have heard of U.O.s who kept a strict watch on the private studies or sexual morals of other cadets and did not neglect to report their more significant discoveries to higher authority. A good Company Commander will discountenance such activities in his U.O.s: less sensible men may even encourage them. The seriousness and good character of non-public school cadets often effects their promotion to such positions, where their ignorance of public school notions about "sneaking," their exemplary consciences and their desire to improve their already inflated status can bring about inquisitions and tyrannies of a most sinister kind. Some U.O.s go power-mad. I know of one who used to visit people's rooms, throw their carefully polished best boots out of the window, and then order that the boots should be produced in five minutes' time, properly cleaned for his inspection. This kind of thing is mercifully rare: most U.O.s spend an unhappy time doing a thankless job which they are relieved to shed at the end of the course. Still, this particular system, and the firm belief in it held by most of the instructors, are outstanding features of the R.M.A. in its character-building rôle. The amount of "responsibility," "initiative," and pride in status churned out this way, not to mention the probability of less desirable effects, may easily be imagined.

Another Arnoldian touch is the ruthless way in which the cadets' private time and personal activities are restricted. These boys are the same age as undergraduates. Their routine of compulsory games, compulsory dining-in, or compulsory study would make the average undergraduate, or indeed the average private soldier of the same age, hysterical with rage and frustration. But it is not considered desirable for a cadet, during term time, to have private interests, and there is an end of it. The emphasis is on corporate life and corporate activity ("sociability" in its least compromising and attractive form). As for the games, apart from ensuring that the cadet is in a known place at a known time, they are also credited with bestowing the usual benefits—team spirit, *mens sana in corpore sano*, and what not. But if fitness is a paramount consideration, self-control is even more so. This is where we finally arrive at that monumental institution, inescapable, lowering, nightmarish, implacable—the Drill Square.

The amount of time cadets spend in performing complex (and very beautiful) drill movements, with perfectly timed co-ordination of feet and weapons, is scarcely credible. Drill is the special province of the Warrant Officers and, at the time of which I write, was above all the concern of that quintessential guardsman, Regimental Serjeant-Major Lord. Mr. Lord, some said, was the "most magnificent soldier in the world": beautifully proportioned, splendidly accoutred, with the eyes and wits of Ulysses, the voice of Agamemnon, the heart (for use only off the drill square) of Andromache; R.S.M. Lord on his rostrum was indeed a demi-god to inspire fear or adoration. Behind him would be the Adjutant (boots and spurs, breeches and sword), and behind him again perhaps the Commandant himself with the scarlet gorgets and hat-band appropriate to his unassailable rank.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And beneath them the hundreds of cadets would wheel and turn, march and countermarch, with immaculate precision. It was a proud thing, they tell me, to drill under Serjeant-Major Lord, even though the slightest piece of inattention would send you whirling off the square under escort to await inevitable and heavy punishment, even though you drilled for hours on end until the stink of sweat and exhaustion hovered over the massed cadets like the brimstone over Sodom.

And of course, with such a man about the place, standards of dress (civilian or uniform) were superb. Appear turned out in the manner of the average business man going to his office this morning, and you would spend the rest of the term doing drills and restrictions. Again, the saluting at Sandhurst is tremendous. If you walk round Sandhurst looking remotely as if you might be an Officer, you will receive an incessant barrage of compliments. The muddy boy in P.T. shorts will stop running, square his shoulders, and snap his eyes in your direction like knives. The elegant young gentleman in the brown trilby will lift it from his head with a controlled jerk to replace it an exact number of seconds later at precisely the same angle. Boys in uniform with sticks, swords, rifles, or submachine guns will perform a volume of intricate movements, alone or as a body, for your especial benefit. Your bewilderment, pleasure, or embarrassment mean nothing to them: it is merely a matter of correct compliments being paid at all times.... So go to Sandhurst in a bowler hat and see for yourself. Do not forget to return the salutes: in the face of such punctilious virtuosity, it is the least you can do.

One further observation. The characters, intelligences, general abilities, of most boys who opt for the Army are, in relation to their educational backgrounds, of a very average nature. Brilliant boys do not go into the Army—they become lawyers, writers, dons, or confidence men, but not soldiers. Nor do exceptionally stupid or sluggish or morally feeble boys: they would not pass a Regular Commissions Board. Sandhurst boys, in fact, are clean, amiable, reasonably intelligent, physically sound, medium-sensual human beings. We have seen them under training as cadets. At an earlier stage in this essay we considered the influences to which, as newly-commissioned officers, they will later be subjected at Warminster. Let us now speculate briefly as to what is likely to happen to young minds when the moral doctrine of Warminster is superimposed on that of Sandhurst; and let us then follow the owners of those minds into their Regiments and the world of service for which they have been so painstakingly prepared.

MILITARY knowledge is one thing; but without the necessary pride in one's status and the determination never to prejudice that status by physical failure, without the "humour" to disregard inconvenience and discomfort, the "sociability" to be polite to superiors who are making fools of themselves, without the enthusiasm, courage, initiative, and responsibility to see an action fiercely undertaken and reliably completed, military knowledge is mere vanity, sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal. Thus spake the Chief Instructor at Warminster. But what did all this mean to the amiable, well-disciplined, well-disposed adolescents fresh from Sandhurst? How would they interpret all this as a guide for future action? "All this," it must be remembered, had come on top of considerable previous training, training liberal and illiberal, military and cultural and moral—not to mention the careful impression of "apartness" which had been steadily fostered in them for three years now. So how was this intricate matrix of instruction and training and influence to resolve itself in the finished product, the active Officer when finally delivered to his Regiment? Before going to my own Regiment, I speculated about what I was likely to find. I thought I should find a self-consciously professional caste of Officers, for such elaborate and extended training must surely encourage professional feeling; I thought that some Officers, particularly in the "Etonian" Regiments, would be snobbish in a conventional, *Daily Mirror*-baiting, way; and I was very much afraid that there would be a good deal of moral priggishness in my own Regiment and others of the same kind—in which, I thought, there would not be enough upper-class worldliness to counteract the sober strictures of Sandhurst and Warminster. But the important point is that I expected to find everything ultimately dependent on a purely *professional* attitude. I expected that professional knowledge, informed and strengthened by so much moral teaching, would result in a special sense of obligation; that the Officers' claim to authority and command would be based on a sense of professional status. I cannot say I was much attracted by this conception, for it implied a sense of dedication which I felt might be both sinister and harmful; but at least it would be

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

professional dedication, and therefore (to the Army at least) beneficial.

The reality I found was something totally different. This reality, though superficially more amiable, was in essence far more sinister than the conception I had reached in my deductions. It too was completely deducible from what I had so far observed, but only if one gave logic the necessary slant which one should always give it when dealing with human and therefore fallible entities. I had neglected this, and what I was to find was a surprise of a staggering nature.

WHEN my battalion disembarked at Mombasa in the summer of 1955, we were to proceed as a unit by train to Nairobi—a journey of nearly twenty-four hours.

When such a thing happens in England or Europe, Officers travel first-class and other ranks third-class (as it then was), an efficient, practical method of keeping people where you want them and one which provides the troops with accommodation, admittedly less comfortable than that of the Officers, but perfectly adequate for all that. Feeding on such occasions is centrally organised: either everyone has sandwiches, or there is a dining-car in which the whole battalion eats by shifts. In the light of all this, the troop train from Mombasa was rather a surprise. There was a first-class coach for the Officers, and an ingenious system of couchettes provided each Officer with a proper bed for the night. Next to the Officers' coach was a well-appointed dining-car, in which we were provided with three hot meals during the journey and as much drink, within elastic licensing hours, as we could hold or pay for. Again, next to the dining-car was a second-class coach for Warrant Officers and Serjeants. This was perceptibly inferior to our first-class affair, but it was tolerable to say the least and also had a workable system of couchettes. The Warrant Officers and Serjeants had the use of the dining-car, and they, like ourselves, had three hot meals between Mombasa and Nairobi (and a speedy bar service). Beyond their second-class coach was a series of third-class coaches "for Corporals and below." These had wooden seats (very crowded), bad ventilation, inadequate space for the men's kit, poor sanitation, and execrable lighting. They were dirty in the extreme; there were not enough. (I was the wretched Officer who had to try to pack everyone into them.) They were, in a word, unutterably bloody. And of course, there was no question of "Corporals and below" having a dining-car. *Their* rations for twenty-four hours were two bags each (there were not, in any case, enough bags to go round) of stale sandwiches and half-rotten tomatoes.

I shall never forget the scene I found when, as "train Adjutant," I had to accompany the R.S.M. down the train during the night. We could hardly get down the train for a start. Piles of kit, piles of bodies blocked everything. The smell of sweat was appalling, the stench from the blocked w.c.s purgatorial. The remains of sandwiches and oozing tomatoes were encrusted over everything and everybody. It was as I have always imagined D.P. trains—rumbling away through Russia or Poland with their massed and brutalised cargo—except that instead of cold there was a damp, fetid, charnel-house heat. "Corporals and below" did not have a nice journey. I wonder we reached Nairobi without a mutiny.

I should emphasise, lest it be thought that I am having a cosy Leftist whine about this, that these conditions were not normal and could never be found in Europe. This was Kenya, there was still an emergency there, and in any case the authorities responsible for our train, accustomed to make such very divergent arrangements for Officers (all white) and other ranks (all coloured) when transporting native Regiments, had merely equated our troops for this purpose with African askaris and provided the ferocious accommodation deemed apposite by this reckoning. There was no malice here, not towards us at any rate, only muddle. Our own Officers, who were in no way to blame for this (who had indeed been trained to keep their men "as happy as possible in all circumstances") were indignant and dismayed. But—and here we reach the heart of the matter—there was one other element in the attitude of our Officers (and of course myself) which is not so much cause for congratulation and in which the real significance of this small incident lies. "It was disgraceful," we said, "that the Kenyan Government, when availing itself of the services of a famous Regiment, should think it could pack our men like cattle into such foul transport.... But this much one must say. It had had the sense to realise that *Gentlemen* could not be treated in any way but the proper fashion.... The arrangements for the troops were a disgrace. But at least a proper distinction had been made. And time now for a drink and some dinner? ... It was only to be hoped that the Kenyan Government

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knew that Gentlemen drank wine from France, and not some trumped-up muck from South Africa. . . ."

We were *not* saying that, as Officers responsible for troops, we should automatically have better accommodation which would be consistent with our official positions and enable us to perform our official duties with more convenience and therefore more efficiency. We *were* saying that since we were not only Officers but also gentlemen we were clearly entitled to be properly looked after, and woe betide a Government if it dared forget the fact. The troops were our troops and their transport was a thoroughly poor show. They were still only troops and, at a pinch, must put up with this sort of thing. But we—well, we were gentlemen, and that was all there was to it.

It is this particular aspect of Officers' self-regard that I want to describe and explain. I want to make plain how little the average Officer regards himself as a professional man giving orders by virtue of his professional status, and how strongly such an Officer is convinced (despite the fact that his origins may be middle-class or even lower in the social scale) that he has somehow been given the absolute and *personal* right to command, that this right is somehow rooted in himself as a person as firmly as such a right was deemed to be rooted in a feudal overlord, albeit for very different reasons. After my account of the education and moral training of a young Officer, it may seem incredible that he should regard himself as exercising his powers by personal right, but that is exactly what I am saying does, in fact, happen. Indeed, such a feudal attitude, so far from being at variance with an Officer's education, is the foreseeable and logical consequence of it. "Feudal"? How is it that an education, supposedly professional in essence and sponsored, after all, by a democratic country, is positively creating from nothing a kind of feudal aspiration in an utterly incongruous class of young man?

THE word "feudal" has always been loosely applied to the Army, but most people mean by this only that the discipline is strict, or that Officers are rather snobbish, or that there is no trade union.

I am using the word in a far more exact sense —to mean, as the *Oxford Dictionary* says, "based on relation of vassal and superior," based, that is, on a definite and unassailable personal right, which in the Middle Ages was conferred by social class and land tenure, but of course these days is conferred by other (equally artificial) considerations. Once a man arrogates to himself a "feudal" right to command, it means he thinks he commands by right not only soldiers over whom he is appointed an Officer but anyone who happens to belong to an inferior order. Once upon a time this matter of superiority and inferiority was very simply determined by reference to a strict scale of social precedence. The factors in the "neo-feudalism" which I am trying to describe are very different. Consider certain basic examples of it as displayed in people I knew.

Second Lieutenant A. was a Roman Catholic from a professional family of moderate means (his father was a lawyer in a provincial town). He had done badly at Sandhurst, since he had limited intelligence and little application, but he had a family connection with our Regiment, was an agreeable and well-mannered boy, and so was accepted by our Colonel. He was sincere in his religious beliefs, drank too much, was sexually indiscriminate. His other amusements were horses (racing, hunting), field sports in general, gambling. Here are some of the things which A. would not do because he considered them "inconsistent" with his status. He would not: be punctual with inferior ranks ("*they* wait for *me*"); join the troops in a run ("I don't need that sort of thing"); box with the troops ("they will not respect me if they see me with a bloody nose"); use the troops' lavatories; undertake any menial task (even on manœuvres); or accept a dressing-down from a superior who (a survival from the war) had been commissioned after many years in the ranks. It is only fair to add that A. had a real gift for handling men and was outstanding on forest patrols in Kenya.

A.'s conception of his status had nothing to do with his actual position or obligations as an Officer, or with good-form middle-class notions of "proper conduct"—in fact his ideas if anything compromised the former and ran completely counter to the latter. His conception of his position was definitely based on a type of feudal relation with his men.

Or consider Lieutenant B., also trained at Sandhurst. B. had an analytical intelligence, fair general culture, and a liberal outlook. The laziest man I have ever met, he had obviously only drifted into the Army by sheer chance and the lack of positive interest in any other idea. B.'s amusements were reading, desultory conversations of a mildly philosophic nature, mathe-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

matics, bridge. He was utterly indifferent to the Army and everything about it, but his acuteness enabled him to get through his duties without any trouble. Here are some remarks he made to me at various times:

"Serjeant-Major X. took me on one side to-day and said my untidiness made a bad impression in the Company. I told him that tidiness was only essential to the rank-and-file, who would otherwise just let themselves go altogether....

"Driver Y. didn't want me to drive his truck, so I drove it at seventy for five miles flat. It's good for them to see a little Officer-type driving....

"Serjeant Z. is getting familiar. He asked me into his quarter for a cup of tea with his wife...."

This is the pattern. A kind and intelligent man, B. is nevertheless convinced that he cannot take tea with a Serjeant's wife. If this had been mere petty snobbishness, it would have been disagreeable but harmless. It was, however, something far deeper: it was a genuine conviction of rooted and superior status which simply would not brook such a proceeding.

Or again, there was Captain C. Unlike either A. or B., he was interested in the professional aspects of soldiering, and spent much time and effort devising new ways of shortening cumbrous military processes (generally tedious matters of administration). C. was always very concerned with his men's welfare, to which he gave genuine consideration (on the face of it, just the kind of competent, thoughtful, and public-spirited young Officer which a Labour Government would wish to perpetuate in "a democratic Army"). But C.'s was scarcely a democratic nature. "They are rather like pet animals," he said to me of his men one day. "One must keep them clean and properly fed, so that they do not get diseased and are in good working order. One must teach them to react swiftly and without thought to certain external stimuli or signals. Just as you whistle for a dog, so there must be certain simple and easily recognisable forms of words for the men. They must be given a certain amount of genuine affection, so that they feel loved and secure. They must expect, and on the whole receive, justice—a lump of sugar when they have done well, a whipping when they have been disobedient. But they must also realise that there are too many of them for justice always to work dead correctly in individual cases, and that occasional lumps of sugar will go to the idle and mischievous, occasional whippings to the industrious and innocent.... And they should be made to recognise the signs one sometimes gives when one simply does not want to be bothered with them...."

Lastly, take the rather remarkable Captain D. D., though of the same middle-class stock as the others, had been at one of the "top" public schools, had rather more money than the rest of us, and boasted a father who had served (during the war) in a Regiment distinctly smarter than our own. Thus he had certain social pretensions.

D. was keen on horse-racing (though only in a very broad and ill-informed way), and went one Sunday to a small meeting in Germany, sponsored and organised by the British Army of the Rhine, whose men and their horses were alone eligible to compete. It was thus an affair on the scale of a small point-to-point. The only betting was by means of a very amateur totalisator, which was run by members of the Royal Army Pay Corps and presided over by an elderly and plebeian Lieutenant-Colonel, himself also of the Pay Corps. Both the Colonel and his men had given up their Sunday afternoon to do this, and though the tote was hardly a triumph of speed or efficiency, it was, on the whole, remarkable as a piece of makeshift goodwill. To this tote went Captain D. to bet on the last race of the afternoon. He was, of course, in civilian clothes, but his status if not his identity was easily discernible in the closed circle of attendants. The last race had only three runners, one of which, far superior in its record to the others, was owned and ridden by a well-known gentleman rider (who was also, in the time he could spare, an Officer of Hussars): the animal could only fail to win through the direct intervention of God. (It was called *Satan's Pride*). The tote dividend would be minute, and D. decided to back the favourite with a very substantial sum, hoping that the sheer size of his wager would bring him a tangible return. It was also a good opportunity to show off, which he always enjoyed. Accordingly, he demanded fifty pounds' worth of tickets on *Satan's Pride*. The Corporal at the window went white and hurried off to fetch the Colonel in charge, who appeared (since he was on duty of a kind) in a battered suit of battle-dress, and took D. on one side. There was no reason, he said in broad Midland tones, why D. should not put £50 on a horse; but in this particular race everyone was backing *Satan's Pride*, the dividend if it won would in any case be negligible, and D.'s £50 would make it almost

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

non-existent—perhaps a penny half-penny in twenty shillings. Would D. consider lowering his stake and letting other people have a look-in? The bets were very modest, and £50 was not only completely wrecking the market but was—well—rather ostentatious.

Instead of answering the old man in courteous tones, D. completely lost control. With an occasional and insultingly stressed use of the word *Sir*, he demanded to know What an ex-ranker member of the Pay Corps, who came to a Race Meeting in Uniform, could be expected to know about Betting or Gentlemen's habits in the matter, accused the Colonel of snivelling, egalitarian, lower middle-class prejudices, and finally shouted aloud that if Pay Corps Officers were too mean or spineless to risk £50 on a horse, then it was Time they had Lessons from their Betters. The old man merely shrugged with good-humoured resignation and let D. have his way. (I should add that *Satan's Pride*, having led by 200 yards, fell at the last fence, leaving *Molly's Son* to win and pay a dividend of ten pounds odd for a two-shilling ticket.)

The incident was inspired by D.'s resentment that he, an Officer, was being criticised by someone who did not, in a proper analysis, belong in the same category. The Colonel, for a start, was in the Pay Corps, the Officers of which could hardly aspire to the status of the Infantry; and in any case the old man simply was not "a gentleman" and, having emerged after years in the ranks, had no claim to possess the qualities with which D. (trained as an Officer from the beginning) must inevitably be blessed. So D. could ignore the entire official structure of the Army (not to mention the requirements of mere good manners) and give a blatantly feudal exhibition of hysterical spite. Nor is it insignificant that the Colonel accepted the situation and let D. get away both with his insults and his demands.

IF MY reader will accept the validity of these brief sketches, he will see what I am getting at. The point is, not that these Officers were cruel to their men or that, from a purely practical point of view, their various attitudes did not answer fairly well, but simply that they regarded themselves as so much set apart as to belong to a totally different class of human being—a class naturally designed to impose its will on all inferior classes.

But how did their painstaking educations at Sandhurst and Warminster achieve this unlooked-for and immoral result? My four examples were all middle-class boys of desperately respectable, decent, and dutiful families. There was no question of their having absorbed patrician ideas at their mothers' knee. Their families were not even military, so that neither was there any question of their having been reared in an atmosphere of cantonments and command. *And yet here they were*, plainly conscious that it was their absolute right to exercise unquestioned personal authority.

The answer lies in two fundamental elements of their education. Firstly, the matter of segregation; secondly (and far more important), the insistence on the great quasi-moral imperatives. We have seen how a boy, selected as a potential officer at school, is set apart as such at his Regimental Depot. Now, this segregation is in itself merely the result of practical policy, and is intended to ensure that supposedly promising and intelligent boys enjoy more advanced and intensive training. But in fact the constant reference to the "potential officers' squad," how it should do better than the others, how it is disgracing its name, how its members "aren't Officers yet"; the use of expressions like "fine Officers you'll make," "behaviour not to be expected of . . . ," "by God, I'll give you Officer"; all this, though only, I think, on a fairly superficial level, does prepare the ground very effectively for the sowing of the seed that is to grow into a blown and noxious sense of feudal superiority.

But the influence of the quasi-moral imperatives ("responsibility," etc.), and the severe practical discipline based on these imperatives, are the decisive factors. It all comes about this way. Boys chosen to be trained as Officers are given no rest until they have absorbed certain influences "which are essential to the character of an Officer" and in themselves constitute a whole ethos. The transition from the imperative "Officers must have these qualities" to the general "Officers always do have these qualities" is easy. Then throw in the fact that these boys have always been set apart, both by their early education and in the Army, and it is equally easy to conclude that those so chosen must always, in a manner, have possessed these qualities, and that training is merely designed to emphasise or bring them out. You have then passed, by two easy stages, from a state of affairs where certain, theoretically superior, qualities, are merely going to be taught, to a new conception whereby these very qualities are more or less conceded always to have existed in certain people—those chosen

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to become Officers. Add to this the insistence on "pride as an Officer" ("an Officer never falls out," etc.) and you have completely deserted your original conception of Officers being merely a highly-trained professional body and have arrived at a notion of a moral élite—and, what is worse, at a notion of a natural or born moral élite.

The right of command arrogated to themselves by Officers is thus seen to be even more firmly based than the feudal right conferred by high birth on a landowning class; for this modern right of command is supposedly conferred by birth on a *morally* distinguished class and, thus conferred, is quite unquestionable by the average Englishman, the more so if he comes from those lower strata of the middle class which have always been so impressed by moral sanctions.

I SHOULD like to add two further observations. In the first place, once an Officer is established, in his own view, as a member of a superior and order-giving class, he never loses this sense; but he can and often does lose all awareness of the moral basis of this superiority and all the qualities which constitutes this basis. He just becomes superior, as it were, *in vacuo*. He becomes a "gentleman." It is easy to see how the moral imperatives may lose their freshness when exposed to a dozen unfamiliar and exacting climates and a variety of retrograde influences—sexual opportunity, drink, the worldly air of worldly companions, or just sheer boredom.

When this happens, one gets that product so typical of the British—the amateur English Officer. Highly-trained professionally and morally, he has forgotten his professional techniques and sloughed off his sense of moral obligation; but he has retained an unassailable sense of his own superiority (for is it not innate?) and absolute right to give orders. He still orders gin in the Mess with the same God-given conviction as he would give a wrong order on the parade ground he so seldom visits.

This is all unpromising, but, curiously, it brings about a situation in which perhaps we have something to be grateful for. In so far as the British Officer regards his status as innate, he thinks of himself as a gentleman first and an Officer second; it follows that professional jealousies, military cabals, "junta-ing," if you like, do not exist in the British Army to the extent that they can, and do, exist in armies whose Officer corps are more self-consciously professional. British Officers, on the one hand, do not constitute a "militaristic" menace; on the other hand, they are still sufficiently confident to rumble along and transact the Army's business quite adequately. From a practical point of view, this might seem a very reasonable solution to the problem of what sort of Army a democracy can tolerate. Our Officers are not a danger to Government, just manage to get by, eschew fanaticism. An excellent solution? But only if you can accept the idea of increasing, year in, year out, the small but definite body of men who are convinced of their absolute and innate right to exercise the role of their class—command.

Secondly, it is important to note that the production and training of this new type of feudal Officer—"neo-feudal," if you prefer—is the direct response of the military Establishment to the demands of Hore Belisha, and others after him, that this same military Establishment should change its ways and employ Officers of professional rather than social qualifications. The Army got rid of Hore Belisha without much trouble, but these demands were constantly made throughout the war, and by 1945 it was obvious that the Socialist Government was bent on deleting "the last traces of social privilege" from the military scene. Very well, replied the military Establishment: we will accept boys of whatever class, provided they are sufficiently educated to undergo training, and we will ensure that the training itself contains liberal elements academically and gives no advantage at all to the boy from the smart public school. But, as we have seen, the Regiments themselves have defiantly pursued their own policies in regard to the origins and incomes of the Officers they accept; and, as a matter of far greater significance, even boys of the least possibly privileged backgrounds are being trained, by carefully inculcated moral influence, to regard themselves and their powers in exactly the same way as their predecessors—as Blimp, Marlborough, or even Richard the Lionheart.

Nor is there any reason to look for change. The Sandys reforms, popularly supposed to portend a more "up-to-date" Army, are in fact concerned only to limit and reorganise those Regiments whose functions are becoming obsolete and to introduce certain new and more technical emphases. In the course of all this, various Regiments and Officers will undoubtedly disappear, some of the more gilded Regiments and Officers among them. But this will only shrink the existing structure; it will not radically alter it. There

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will still be smart Regiments with monied Etonians; and the other Regiments, no matter how "technical" they may become, will still be officered by boys who, trained at Sandhurst as well as in scientific institutions, will still have absorbed sufficient military-cum-moral influences to arrogate to themselves the "personal right to command" of which I have spoken in these pages.

Is there no way out? Have we only a choice between a "feudal" Etonian, preening himself outside Buckingham Palace in a scarlet tunic, and a "neo-feudalised" technician brimming with moral superiority in front of his rocket? In the end they are both one and the same: whatever Hore Belisha may have said in 1939, however the nation may have opined in 1945, these are high-quality Establishment products, made to last.

SO THERE it is. We have seen that an education of a basically moral nature convinces its recipients that they are an élite, so that to all intents they come to resemble a feudal class in their confirmed sense of status. Where I had expected to find a professional Officer corps, I found a caste rooted in its own conception of superior, God-given status.

It may be said we always knew this about the Army. I disagree. We always knew the Army had strict discipline, and in this sense some of us called it "feudal." We knew its Officers tended to be snobbish, and in this sense again it was stigmatised as "feudal." But the current fashion in which the Army produces its caste of "gentleman," by convincing them that, *whatever* their social class, they were endowed at birth with unique qualities of character which entitle them to assume overlord status for all time, is a very different matter. For this was *not* the case before the war. At that time the appeal was directly aimed at purely social instincts of class superiority, not at the almost religious instincts that are worked upon to-day.

It is the new generation, the men who have been coming out of Sandhurst since the war, that can most truly and clearly be seen to have "perished by the Sword." In the sense that any man must perish who loses a proper notion of his place with and among other men. The Sword, symbol of honour and leadership, kills in the back when it is also a symbol of caste.

Poet and Landlady

He, who hates gardens, walks among her flowers
Longing to smash them; like a fiery shirt
He wears desire for colour, taste and scent;
  And when a sparrow tears
At aster, dahlia, he's not innocent—
He too'd destroy what has such power to hurt.

She watches from her window for the birds,
Runs out with cries to save the flowers he hates;
Hers is a house where fires are never lit
  Because of dirt, where words
Remain as lifeless as the polished grates;
She'd grow plain privet if the tenant quit.

Edward Lucie-Smith

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Apology for Poezzy

IT MIGHT be useful to have an assessment of the importance of Christopher Logue's recent Third Programme poetry-and-jazz experiment, *Red Bird Dancing on Ivory*, from someone who knows nothing about jazz and so avoids the charge that he would be bound to support it when it occurred in such a respectable conjunction. I don't even know what *kind* of jazz Mr. Logue used, or anything of the antecedents of such a programme; I suppose it started in San Francisco. Orgiastic jazz, as described in *On The Road*, leaves me entirely teetotal, and the notion of reading poetry aloud while it goes on in order to achieve a fortuitous blend, poezzy, is at best mindless, at worst pretentious (when there is some halfwitted theory at work about how modern life is really like this). But Mr. Logue's work is not at all of this kind; it is obviously rooted in the old-fashioned belief that music and sweet poetry agree, or ought to. His is one more attempt to get the lyre back into the lyric; and the fact that the lyre is here a jazz quintet should not prevent everybody who cares about poetry from attending to it very seriously.

The difficulties of true lyric poetry began when music developed its own rhetoric, when independent musical forms emerged, when harmony and counterpoint made it self-sufficient. Wherever the word was important and habitually came into contact with music (in the Mass, for instance), it had to be protected. In Italy and England alike the madrigal so plainly exhibited the dominance of the music over the word that there were temporarily successful movements to revive ancient homophonic music, simply so that the words could get a hearing. But musicians were not giving away all their gains, and the agreement of music and sweet poetry has subsequently been difficult to reach and maintain; the Symbolists belatedly saw that Wagner was a musician before everything, Yeats experimented hopelessly with the psaltery. Meanwhile lyric poetry *without* music came to be the dominant poetic kind; but it was poetry on a page. Technological compensation for the utter defeat of the word by the modern orchestra could have been provided by the compositor, as Mallarmé saw; lyric poetry could have become silent, an entirely visual matter. It has not quite done so because it is a very primitive form and naturally resists adaptation; also because poets continue to insist on reading their poems. That they often do so very badly is a symptom of the general confusion; but their instinct, though primitive, is right. Another primitivist yearning is to get the music back, somehow; poetry is written to go with a certain kind of music (*Sweeney Agonistes*), or music to go with a certain kind of poetry (*Façade*).

Mr. Logue is a primitivising poet who likes to recite his verses and also to have some music with them. In this programme he reads a sequence of poems which he has adapted from Neruda. I don't know the original poems or how freely he has treated them, but they presumably provided the extreme sensuality of tone, and the ripe imagery. Mr. Logue reads very well, not at all "beautifully." He got his music from Tony Kinsey and Bill Le Sage, and Mr. Kinsey's Quintet played it. The Quintet consists of a trumpet, a trombone, a double bass, Mr. Kinsey's own drums, and a piano doubling with "vibes." This last instrument should be thrown out at once; its slow idiotic belling and throbbing is tedious and distracting, and it takes the pianist away from his piano, where he is superb. The presence of this vulgar instrument is in a way characteristic of the music; sometimes it was fresh and beautiful and full of harmonic interest, but it would slide without warning into straight Palais de Danse. The players are terrific virtuosi and their solos are wonderful, but it may be that in jazz, where improvisation counts for so much, they can't always tell the banal from the beatific.

What matters here, however, is the union of music and poetry. The balance was often unhappy, Logue's voice retreating behind brass; but the remedy for this is simply, I think, an engineering matter, quite aside from the real problem. There was nothing wrong with the principle, and Logue and Kinsey are to be congratulated on the variety of ways in which they contrive to bring poetry and music together. As the sequence contains a number of repeated or associated images (a grasshopper sheltering from the cold, a tongue seen as a red bird dancing on ivory) so there is also thematic restatement in the music. A blues is repeated in a much modified form; a phrase ("lithe girl brown girl") has a characteristic four-note musical equivalent. There are, in short, thematic links. But the nature of the union is hard to describe in words. Sometimes there is fairly direct illustration—a hiss and clatter of drums for wind, a sudden *sforzando* after "strip off your clothes." But for the most part the relations between word and music are less tangible, as it is clear they must

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be if poezzy is to avoid the mistakes of the past. Sometimes the reader is talking through music, sometimes chanting sleepily to its rhythms; sometimes he even sings to its tune. Occasionally the verbal rhythm was too much distorted, and that is presumably a bad fault. But the sheer variety of method was enchanting: a brief, fiercely wretched epigram had an electrifying drum and bass accompaniment; another poem became a sort of *dumka*, alternating doodly crooning with neurotic, drumswept gabble. The last poem of the sequence is very fine in itself—the rich sexual spasms have given way to an uneasy calm, at the point where regret and lassitude cross. Its elaborate musical accompaniment—a trombone variation on the blues, obsessed drumming and plodding bass—make it something more splendid again, a splendidly new thing; and its relation to the sequence as a whole is fully established as well.

The quality of the poems raises another point. (So firmly do I associate the knowing of poetry with the reading of books that I keep thinking I haven't had a chance to "read" these poems—the sort of criticism one writes is so dependent on a long look at a still page.) They are poems of sexual excitement, their language is that of the *Canticle* (apples, wheat, poppies) translated into a new idiom and sometimes raving off into *adunata*-type nonsense, but fresh and immediate to the senses, whether celebrating love, hatred or indifference. Could poezzy be made of verse in which there was less sensuality and more sense? Mr. Logue may not be interested in the question; in any case, the only way to find out is by experiment. *Red Bird* should encourage such experiment (not necessarily with jazz, which is after all only one kind of music) and the Third Programme is the proper place for it. Mr. Logue's programme itself should be repeated soon and often, both for its own excellence and as a model; and since poezzy certainly works with his verse he should be urged to do more. For this is not at all a fad, or a merely bright gesture; it is a genuine invention. We may yet have our poetry off the tape recorder as a regular thing, and use the book only for reference, like an opera libretto.

Frank Kermode

On Translating "Zhivago"

By Manya Harari

I HAVE been asked several times to comment on Mr. Edmund Wilson's criticism of the English version of *Doctor Zhivago*. They appear in the first few pages of his brilliant article on Pasternak [in *The New Yorker* of November 15th, 1958] and they have served an excellent purpose in stimulating controversy on the problems of translating from the Russian. As, however, some of them refer to the American rather than the English edition of the book I must first say something about the difference between the two.

Max Hayward and I took only about six months to translate the Russian text because we believed that, once the book was outside Russia, the sooner it was published, widely known, and (as we hoped) appreciated as a literary work, the better it would be for Pasternak. To save time we sent our first draft to the New York publishers and, from then on, the revision was done on both sides of the Atlantic until the last possible moment. It was intended to collate the two sets of corrections in order to arrive at an identical text but we soon found that this would not be possible. Firstly, there was too much difference in approach to language problems between the American editors and ourselves (we assumed that this was mainly due to the difference between English and American usage); and secondly, since the New York publishers hurried quite as much as we did and printing takes less time in the States than here, our heavily corrected page proofs reached them too late. Since they were taking immense trouble we had no reason to think that their text would be further from the Russian than our own. As for the incongruous fact that, for reasons of mutual courtesy, Max Hayward's and my names were attached to both texts, this was only a minor extravaganza in the epic of the publication of *Zhivago*.

The difficulties of translating Pasternak are

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formidable, and to those listed by Edmund Wilson must, I think, be added the fact that although, on analysing any individual sentence, we may find it as involved as Mr. Wilson says, the general impression on the reader of the Russian is that of a fluent, natural, colloquial, conversational style. (This is not true of Pasternak's early period when he preferred vivid imagery to simplicity of tone.) As we said in our *Translators' Note* to the Collins edition, both Max Hayward and I were deeply conscious of our failure to do justice to this style. Of the dozen passages which Mr. Wilson quotes as mistranslations, some are excellent examples of our failure, others show how difficult it is to solve the underlying problems.

Two of these examples ("Arzamas" and the colour of Lara's hair) are plainly mistranslations on our part. One of them we noticed and corrected in a reprint, the other remained undetected until Mr. Wilson picked it up. Two are mistranslations which occur only in the U.S. version.

(1) *Zemlya smuglela na solntse shokoladno-kofeynym otlivom.*

U.S. VERSION: "(the soil) shimmered with rich golden browns." ENGLISH VERSION: "(the soil) was sunburned to a coffee-chocolate brown." WILSON'S VERSION: "(the soil) showed brown in the sun with varying shades of chocolate and coffee."

(2) *Opyat den proshol v pomeshatelstve tikhom.*

U.S. VERSION: "Another day went by like a dream." ENGLISH VERSION: "Another day of quiet sadness went by." WILSON'S VERSION: "Another day passed with an insane slowness."

In both these cases the English translation is closer to the Russian than either the American or Edmund Wilson's version.

In the following passage both the English and the U.S. versions are less exact than Mr. Wilson's:

Zarosl, vsya v rose, otryakhivalas i okhorashivalas, vzdragivaya, kak ot shchekotki.

U.S. VERSION: "The vegetation, all covered with dew, trembled with delight." ENGLISH VERSION: "The thicket, all covered with dew, shivered with pleasure." WILSON'S VERSION: "The surrounding vegetation shook the dew off and preened itself, quivering as if it were being tickled."

In the next, the English version is better in some ways and worse in others than the American; Mr. Wilson's is more correct than either except for one mistake:

Sprashivali pod takovuyu pomeshchenye. Poluchali v polzovanye pustovavshye s pervykh mesyatsev revolyutsii obuvnoy sklad ili oranghereyu togda zhe zakryvshevsya tsvetovodstva i pod ikh obshirnymi svodami rasprodavali svoi toshchye i sluchaynye sobranya.

U.S. VERSION: "They applied for premises and obtained the use of some shoe store or flower shop, which had been empty since the first days of the revolution, and there they sold out their small and haphazard collections."

ENGLISH VERSION: "They applied for premises and were given the use of some warehouse which had stood empty since the first days of the revolution when the shop to which it had belonged closed down, and beneath its spacious vaults they sold out their small and haphazard collections."

WILSON'S VERSION: "They would apply for premises of this kind. They would obtain the use of some warehouse for shoes which had been empty since the first days of the revolution or the greenhouse of some florist whose business had been closed down, and under their wide domes they would sell their meagre and haphazard collections."

Mr. Wilson adds: "Why leave out the incongruity of the domes?" The reason is, of course, that *svody* are not domes but vaults.

IN THE next passage the English is better than the American edition, but none of the three versions gives the exact sense:

Ot travyanistogo zapakha zemli i molodoy zeleni bolela golova, kak na maslyanitse ot vodki i blinnogo ugara.

U.S. VERSION: "The grassy smell of earth and young leaves made one drowsy as on the morning after a Shrovetide feast." ENGLISH VERSION: "The grassy smell of earth and young leaves made her head ache like a Shrovetide surfeit of pancakes and vodka." WILSON'S VERSION: "From the grassy smell and the young greenery one's head ached as at Shrovetide from the vodka and the frying of pancakes."

In the original, "the grassy smell" applies to the "young greenery" as well as to the earth (which Mr. Wilson leaves out). As for *ugar*, translated by us as "surfeit" and which Mr. Wilson understands to mean the smell of frying, it can—and in Pasternak's intention probably does—mean both or either. For *ugar* can mean anything from carbon-monoxide fumes to any form of dizziness, physical or figurative (as when in his poem *Bacchanalia* Pasternak speaks of the *ugar* of adventures).

The next three passages raise various problems none of which, I think, have been completely solved:

(1) *Trio zarydalo.* ENGLISH and U.S. VERSION: "The music rose plaintively." WILSON'S VERSION: "The trio began to sob."

Mr. Wilson's version is literally the more correct as well as the more striking of the two. On the other hand, the Russian is not as striking as his sentence. And there is the further problem that

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Russian prefix *za* alters "sobbed" to "began to sob" in an economical and current way which does not exist in English. If this verb-form were translated as "began to" each time it occurred in the Russian text, the translation would, I think, be very clumsy.

(2) *Pogoda peremogalas.* ENGLISH and U.S. VERSION: "The weather was unseasonable." WILSON'S VERSION: "The weather was struggling to recover."

Neither is correct. The Russian means something like "the weather was struggling against disease" but this has none of the strangeness of the English. We deliberately dodged this difficulty because it seemed insuperable. Our only excuse for "unseasonable" is that the weather *was* unseasonable: it was thawing in autumn when it should have been freezing. (Mr. Wilson assumes that the winter was ending, but in fact it was beginning.)

(3) *Shary na pozharnykh kalanchakh.* ENGLISH and U.S. VERSIONS: "The golden domes on belfries." WILSON'S VERSION: "The golden balls on fire towers."

The Russian is in fact: "The balls on fire belfries," which even Mr. Wilson has dodged. I have only recently discovered that the objects referred to were metal balls which were hung from fire-station belfries and served as signals. But had I known this at the time, I would still have hesitated to use the transliteration because the words occur in a lyrical passage of reminiscences, listing several things which are familiar to the Russians though unfamiliar to the English, and the transliteration would hold up the reader in a manner which was not intended by the author. Perhaps the proper solution would have been an explanatory footnote.

THE last example is an error of Mr. Wilson's. *Do svidanya na tom svetye* is correctly given by us as "Farewell until we meet in the next world." Mr. Wilson says in his article that "this is not in the text and would be contrary to Pasternak's cosmology." He has since courteously admitted his mistake to me by letter, though not, so far as I know, in print. I would not raise the matter if it were not to make the obvious point that, in dealing with a text of some 200,000 words, both translators and critics are bound to make some slips, and to suggest that the real argument is not, in fact, about such slips.

There is obviously no excuse for mistranslations, but fortunately these are usually picked up and corrected sooner or later. The real argument, I think, concerns the general approach to the translator's task. Briefly, the problem is whether to transliterate into as good English as one is capable of writing, or to try, at the same time, to keep the tone of the original. In our translation we were influenced by Pasternak's insistence (in his essay *On Shakespeare* and in his *Autobiography*) on the need to keep the tone and to write "in a natural and lively way." Mr. Wilson's suggested versions imply a basically different approach.

Ending the Musical Tradition?

Two Comments on Virgil Thomson's "Modest Proposal"

THE fundamental assumption underlying Mr. Virgil Thomson's stimulating, acute, bold analysis of the musical composer's present predicament [ENCOUNTER, *January**] is evolution: music is an art that has evolved, and as Mr. Thomson vividly shows, has evolved at so terrific a rate in the last 200 years (*i.e.*, since the establishment of sonata form) that the pace has been killing. Progress is now at a standstill. All the "progressive" and even the revolutionary techniques have been absorbed into tradition. And now tradition has stuck. Musicians are occupied in the distributory instead of the manufacturing branch of their trade. So the composer must cease to think of pushing music

* See also the discussion of Virgil Thomson's article by Martin Cooper in the *Daily Telegraph* (February 14th), and by Desmond Shawe-Taylor in the *Sunday Times* (February 15th).—ED.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forward, cease to aim at "establishing" himself in the grand tradition, cultivate instead his own small patch of garden, and if he brings the world a posy from it, that posy will at least be fragrant with sincerity.

It is true that all the restless search of the 20th century for a substitute for tonality-by-key, which had served the art for three centuries but which had seemed to be exhausted by 1900, has been unsuccessful. Serialism has its loud-voiced advocates but makes no impression at all on the general musical public, and it alone of all the modern devices, schools, and tendencies has any pretensions to a place in the evolutionary process, which began at 1000 A.D. with the first tentative efforts at converting monody into polyphony. That process took 500 years to perfect the technique of polyphony, and another 300 were needed to exploit the possibilities of harmony and key. But this technical evolution, like the evolution of technology, has gathered speed since the 17th century, and whereas the physicists have exhausted the earth and are now crying for the moon the musicians are flummoxed and do not know which way to turn. Hence Mr. Thomson's predicament.

I accept Mr. Thomson's analysis in broad outline, while questioning some of his sweeping generalisations caught up in the swirl of his swift argument—his statistical disposal of Brahms and Wagner for instance. But there are two observations to be made. The concept of evolution as the most satisfactory philosophy of musical history (better, that is, than Herodotean or Marxian interpretation) is less than a hundred years old. It came in along with an evolutionary view of ethics on the heels of Darwinism. And it is now being challenged. My own view is that the technique of music has evolved in the way first described by Parry and assumed by Mr. Thomson, but it is the technique not the art itself. I would allow that it was not till the technique had advanced to a certain point that it became possible for a certain type of subject-matter, to wit, socio-political and metaphysical ideas, to be discussed in music by Beethoven. At any rate, until Beethoven such ideas never had been expounded in music. But basically the subject-matter of music, as of all the arts, is the eternal verities. No one propounds an evolutionary philosophy of history for literature or painting, and while I believe evolution to be a correct description of the last thousand years of musical history, I am bound to admit that the corollary of constant progress through evolution is unsound. Mozart is not merely a predecessor of Beethoven nor is Beethoven only the successor to Haydn; they are composers in their own right with their own visions of eternal truth. Still less would I embrace the doctrine deflated by Mr. Thomson that every composer must contribute novelty to the tradition to be worthy of the designation of composer. We have had criticisms of major works by our contemporary composers deploring that they have shown no advance, no new developments in idiom, no fresh ground broken, since their former works. Are we to suppose that on the morrow of the production of *Don Giovanni* in Prague, heads were shaken that alas! poor little Mr. Mozart had not shown any advance in his new opera on *Figaro*?

The other point, and my substantive rejection of Mr. Thomson's somewhat depressed conclusion, is that the world is wide, that though it is unfashionable almost to the point of indecency to mention the eternal verities in art criticism or æsthetic discussion, they are still there for every generation, indeed for every individual to have his say upon them. Bach was not inhibited from writing music because his sons called him "Old Wig" and he came at the end of a period. Let the evolution of technique slow down or be left to the *concrète* mixers. The composer with something to say even on so well-worn a topic as the Kantian trio of God, Freedom, and Immortality, which sufficed for Beethoven, will still catch the world by surprise. And on a narrower front, as Mr. Thomson suggests, "a conquest of the English language by opera" is always a possibility.

Frank Howes

VIRGIL THOMSON'S "modest proposal" is so embellished with verbal pyrotechnics, stylish side-kicks that are hardly very relevant to the matter at issue (but was Saint Saens really all that progressive in "introducing" sonata form into French music almost a generation after Gounod's admirable Mendelssohnian *Symphony in E flat major* of 1855?), and deft trailing of coats before progressive bulls (but does Mr. Thomson really suppose that Wagner's claim to be writing the "music of the future" is invalidated by the box-office receipts of Brahms a century later; the fact remains that *Tristan* determined fifty years of musical evolution), that it may be useful if I summarise his argument.

It seems to go like this:

(*a*) "The 19th century was a brilliant period full of change and excitement and everywhere solidly nourished on the classics."

(*b*) "The speed of evolution accelerated until about 1914."

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(*c*) "Since World War I (or at least since 1925) technical advance and expressivity has shown a decline in vigour."

(*d*) "Music as a language . . . *will not* [my italics], I fear, be evolving much more."

(*e*) Modernism is a concept, perhaps appropriate to the 19th century, that urges an attitude of receptivity towards anything that may seem "progressive." "It is an 'open door' policy regarding change."

(*f*) In the circumstances of (*c*) and (*d*) this attitude is irrelevant. Composers will "have to forget for a time about novelty and change and tradition. The tradition of constant change *must* [my italics] be thrown overboard. . . . I propose to you that every composer has plenty of small ideas . . . and that these ideas are all valid if sincerely and competently acted upon. . . . It is better to work with the ideas one really has . . . than to follow an outworn modernism at any price."

In a word, it has all come to an end, and all composers can do is to make-do and mend.

Clearly Mr. Thomson is right when he asserts that around 1914 a great period of music reached "full term." Clearly any consideration of 20th-century music must start, as does Mr. Thomson's, from the fact that since 1914 music has been in a state of crisis. The demand, whether it come from Printing House Square or the social realists in Moscow, that things should go on unchanged, as though the confident days of the 19th century were still with us, is unreal. Equally unreal, it seems to me, is the assumption of the progress brigade that the radical experimenters of our day (Boulez and so on) are only contemporary counterparts of the radical experimenters of sixty (Debussy) or a hundred (Wagner) years ago. Of course, each generation as it ages is tempted to repeat the old cry of *après moi le déluge*. But that does not alter the fact that deluges, like wolves, do exist. Around 1914 a deluge came in the form of the virtual exhaustion of diatonic harmony (yes, I know good music is still written in C major; the point is that it has become rare enough to excite comment), whose exploitation was the basis of the great achievements of the 19th century. Wagner was working before the deluge; Boulez is working after it. To suggest, merely because both men are innovators, that Boulez is in a similar position to Wagner a century ago is a crude misuse of historical analogy.

Since about 1914 it has clearly become much harder to write a piece of fine music, so much harder that only a handful of composers of outstanding abilities have managed to do so. Thus, in a sense, I am with Mr. Thomson when he says that since the first World War there has been a decline in vigour, although this seems to me a decline not so much in quality as in quantity.

When, however, he goes on to list five post-1914 works that he finds so outstandingly powerful as to merit postponing the date of the decline until 1925, puts Milhaud's *La Création du Monde* and Honegger's *Pacific 231* among them, points out that they were all written before 1926 and then solemnly asserts that nothing of comparable originality has been written since, a suspicion arises that he is really telling us less about the century than about himself, and how infinitely charming he found his early days in Paris. I suggest that suspicion attaches to any guide who overlooks the fact that in 1926 Stravinsky wrote *Oedipus Rex*, in 1936 Bartok wrote the *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, in 1946 Schoenberg wrote the *String Trio*, and in 1956 Stravinsky was at work on *Agon*. To place *La Création du Monde* or *Pacific 231* in the company of four masterpieces such as I have mentioned might be considered an engaging, if somewhat exaggerated, loyalty to early playmates. To imply that these examples of Cocteauesque *chic* of the early 'twenties (a *chic* that did not hesitate to set itself up against the genius of Debussy) are unequalled in originality by anything written since 1926, suggests a profound æsthetic fixation.

CURIOUSLY enough, Mr. Thomson has overlooked the most telling evidence for his thesis that the years since 1914 have marked a decline in creative vigour. If one examines the year of birth of the five composers of the 20th century to whom the word "great" might be applied—Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartok, Berg, and Webern—one makes the alarming discovery that, with the possible exception of Bartok, all of them were by 1914 grown men with a mature and personal style. Where are the composers *born* in this century, where are the composers of Mr. Thomson's generation who grew to maturity in the years after the first World War, who are comparable in stature to these five great names. Hindemith, Dallapiccola, Tippett, Shostakovitch, and maybe Messiaen, have all written one or two fine works, a few which border on lasting greatness. But one has only to mention their names against those of the previous generation to appreciate what a gulf in stature and achievement lies between them.

It may be that Boulez or Stockhausen or Nono will in due course write, or conceivably prove already to have written, music of the import of that produced by the Berg-Stravinsky generation. But it is early days to tell, and living in one of Europe's remotest musical provinces, my acquaintance with the style of their music is too slight for me to have much confidence in my assessment of its quality. No country cousin, Mr. Thomson is, it seems, in no doubt that he is

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more fortunately placed. He finds the products of this school of *sérialisme intégrale* "utterly charming in sound and refreshingly innocent in expression." Well, well....

It is when Mr. Thomson moves on from his account of what has happened in the past to his recommendations for the future that I part company from him, root and branch. Here he reminds me of one of those political philosophers who start off to examine the nature of the political societies with a brave front of objectivity, but who, before the reader can draw breath, have used the examination as a springboard to a pulpit, from which they thunder forth about the particular society they live in, with particular reference to their own position in it. Mr. Thomson skips with such agility from analysis to injunction that he is scarcely observable in mid-air. And he does it on the assumption that examination of the creative past can provide binding creative "oughts" for the future, and as though these "oughts" are as binding for all composers as they appear to be for one Virgil Thomson.

At the back of Mr. Thomson's "modest proposal," that the only way composers should operate to-day is by a sort of make-do and mend operation, lies a presumptuous dogmatism, that is no less dogmatic than the straw castles of "modernism" he attacks so savagely. I do not doubt that for many composers all that is left is to make-do and mend, that among them will be found a number of neo-classicists of the Parisian *avant garde* of thirty-five years ago who have in fact never done anything else; and I do not doubt that this form of academicism will, like most academicisms, produce some acceptable music.

But by what right does Mr. Thomson enjoin this procedure (which is as old as the hills) on his fellow composers? By what right does he demand that they eschew "novelty and change"? And what basis has he for a prediction that "Music as a language, though long may it live, will not, I fear, be evolving much more"? Mr. Thomson may choose to mock the integral serialists, but it is surely a little early to dismiss with such bland assurance an attempt to meet a radical crisis with radical innovations.

Mr. Thomson complains a good deal about "modernism," and, in so far as this word implies a dogma that no work that does not contain some technical innovation can be of value, his complaints are justified. But in so far as "modernism" implies "an open-door policy regarding change," I should have thought that never was it so essential to defend and maintain it. Attempts to shut the door on Wagner were futile because in the final resort he had behind him all the weight of the great tradition he sprang from. It is precisely because it is to-day so temptingly easy to slam the door, and slam it successfully, on new shoots that are tender and tentative and lack the support of tradition, that it is so important to keep a foot in it.

Mr. Thomson really cannot have it both ways. At least the Printing House Square brand of æsthetic conservatism, which urges us to avert our eyes from the "decadence" of Schoenberg and from that flirtatious old carpenter, Igor Stravinsky, and to turn instead to the sound, sane, English structures of Dr. Rubbra, as though there were no crisis at all outside the minds of a few "mad Central Europeans," at least such an attitude has the merit of a certain magnificent, blinkered consistency. Mr. Thomson's brand of conservatism aims to appear ever so much more sophisticated and knowing, but it ends by being ever so much more silly.

For if things have really come to an end, if for his generation there is nothing left but to make-do and mend, then it is surely all-important to uphold the policy of the open door, and to preserve the attitude of benevolent if sceptical interest in what is new that goes with it. Mr. Thomson may offer, and not without reason, a counsel of despair to his own generation. But he should not try to stamp on the fingers of the generations behind him. No one can tell where salvation may come from. It may well be that the generation of Boulez (like, perhaps, the Florentine experimenters of the late 16th century) will produce even less than Mr. Thomson's generation. It may be that the political *Untergang* of Europe will be followed by a lengthy cultural *Untergang*. But even at the worst the human desire to express something in music cannot be extinguished, and sooner or later things will start up again.

In the long run, you cannot impose a static solution on a dynamic situation. That goes for art as it goes for politics. And just as the prime essential of any political system that is to last is an ability to adjust itself to changing circumstances, so a healthy musical society will show interest in the new as well as honour for the old. New times and new men will, as ever, have new things to say and new ways of saying them. The deeper the crisis, the less likely is salvation to come from the sort of patching that Mr. Thomson advocates. The longer it is before musical creation flourishes again, the less likely is it to flourish in present-day terms. It is for this reason that, for all its excesses, sillinesses, and arrogance, I am all for the open-door of "modernism."

Peter Heyworth

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Poker on the Rhine

EVERY spring a plane-load of British politicians, journalists, businessmen, and academics takes flight for Germany, to spend a long week-end with a similar group of Germans at the river resort of Koenigswinter on the Rhine.

Ten times now this conference has assembled at the invitation of the Anglo-German Society, its impeccable respectability attested by the hospitable welcome it receives from both the Federal Government and from Her Majesty's Ambassador. After a decade of this activity it is legitimate to ask, "What does it all add up to?"

That it adds up to something is, I think, shown by the consistency with which the conference is revisited by such busy and hard-boiled characters as the editors and foreign editors of leading newspapers, ex-ministers and service chiefs, and a variety of others who, although they have sources of information elsewhere, nevertheless find this week-end worth their while.

The explanation seems to be that, in three days at Koenigswinter, they are exposed to a wider variety of Anglo-German opinion than could be encountered anywhere else in so short a time. More than the public speeches, the private talk enables them to take the political temperature on topics of the moment. For those participants who come again and again, a main source of interest is the fluctuation of opinion which occurs from year to year. Changes are fairly easy to detect since many of the people are the same, and the problems examined, no matter what the formal title of the year's discussion may be, are always predominantly the same in the end—the Cold War, the *Wiedervereinigung* of divided Germany, and Berlin.

In earlier years it was noticeable that the British were telling the Germans all about "the German problem," while the Germans who, during the years of Nazism, war and occupation somewhat lost the habit of formulating policy for themselves, seemed ready enough to listen. This has changed over the years; but there are other inhibitions on the German side. For them the settlement of Europe involves not only foreign but internal issues, not all of which can be aired without embarrassment in an international gathering. Moreover, Koenigswinter is but a stone's throw from Bonn, and German government supporters are always conscious that the magisterial eye of Dr. Adenauer is upon them. On more than one occasion C.D.U. speakers have seemed unwilling to speculate, even off the record, until *"der Alte"* has given a public lead.

Things are easier for the British, but even with them there is greater caution shown on the government side, which, unlike the opposition, is inevitably represented mainly by back benchers. Controversy is, of course, by no means, confined to the party politicians. Not only the journalists but also the Service chiefs are often in the thick of the battle. (Last year, for instance, the German press headlined, with some bewilderment, a dispute about European security between Air Marshal Sir John Slessor and Field Marshal Lord Harding.)

For some years past, debate has centred around the prospects of achieving German reunification and, in particular, the relevance to this issue first of the rearmament of Western Germany and, more recently, of "disengagement." On these topics the main division has been not so much between Germans and British as between right and left in both countries. On rearmament there was considerable confusion on the left, since the Labour Party was openly split, and the S.P.D. contained numerous diverging currents. When the theme switched to disengagement, however, the socialists of the two countries came very close to a common policy in support of it, while the government parties resisted it with a conviction of righteousness amounting almost to fanaticism.

At the conference held last month, however, it was the turn of the right wing to experience doubts. Suspicion of "disengagement" was still very strong, but neither Conservatives or C.D.U. dared to insist that proposals for zones of limited disarmament or disengagement in Europe would necessarily spell "the end of western defence," for Dr. Adenauer was at that very moment in process of agreeing with Mr. Macmillan that something of this kind might legitimately figure on the agenda for a summit conference. The unhappiness of some Conservative and C.D.U. members at this perplexing turn of events was almost comic, but the socialists were not in the best shape to enjoy the situation, because the S.P.D.'s own favourite disengagement plan had just received a rough handling from Mr. Krushchev in his talk with Erich Ollenhauer in Berlin (and a week later, even more severely, with Carlo Schmid and Fritz Erler, in Moscow).

The truth is that the Berlin crisis, by putting a number of long-held theories to the test, had injected a gleam of realism into the fog of wishful thinking, which has long enveloped the whole question of German reunification. Faced with the threat of a unilateral assault upon the status quo by the Soviet Union, the rival policies both of "situations of strength" and of "disengagement" were revealed as oversimplifications of a highly complex problem.

The interesting and indeed encouraging

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feature of "Koenigswinter 10" was thus a narrowing of differences. The advocates of strength now contemplate negotiation, while the protagonists of negotiation acknowledge more readily that disengagement by itself may not do the trick.

When it was asked: "How willing are the Americans and British to die for Berlin?" it became clear that the answer is: "As ready as the Germans or the Russians—but no readier." Despite Mr. Krushchev's apparent local advantages in Berlin, the conviction grew that the cards are not all stacked on one side and that this contest of wills, fought out under the shadow of nuclear armaments, is unlikely to be pushed by either side to the point where its own forces might have to die for Berlin or anything else. Mr. Robert Birley was not merely making a joke when he said that, in the light of the Koenigswinter discussion, he was "thinking of introducing poker into the Eton curriculum...."

THAT these annual conferences are of interest to the participants is beyond doubt. What their affect is upon Anglo-German relations is harder to determine. In the short run, the influence upon governments is no doubt negligible, but, over a period, informed opinion affects both politicians and diplomats, and it may fairly be assumed that the presence of so many leading journalists and speakers year after year at the Koenigswinter debates has its sequel in the tone of many a leading article or parliamentary speech in both countries. If the writers and speakers themselves did not think so, they would not trouble to come.

There is always much talk at Koenigswinter of the need for "frankness." Points of difference "must be faced, not glossed over..." A mere mutual admiration society will contribute nothing to "genuine understanding." Nevertheless, try as the organisers may, they find it hard to attract to their conferences those publicists in either country who dislike the other, and whose polemics help to keep Anglo-German animosity alive. None of the leading British critics of President Heuss's London visit was at Koenigswinter this year; nor is there adequate representation on the German side of the fairly numerous elements in German public life which are critical of Britain.

A serious attempt was made this year, in a committee devoted to "Anglo-German misunderstandings," to probe the reasons for Bonn's distrust of Mr. Macmillan's Moscow visit. It emerged that even quite friendly Germans resent the implication that, in default of United States leadership, a British Prime Minister might in some way be capable of speaking for "the West." As one speaker said: "We are told that the Americans are the modern Romans, and that the British hope to fill the rôle of those sophisticated Greek secretaries who used to keep the Romans on the rails. We feel, however, that there are as many Greek secretaries to be found in Germany as in Britain. We do not think you have any special international know-how which other nations lack...."

It is perhaps significant that the German chairman of this Committee was too tactful to repeat these frank words in open session. There is indeed a tendency at Koenigswinter to paper over the cracks in the Anglo-German relationship. There are now among the participants so many long standing acquaintances, and even friendships, that there is a disinclination to let rough words spoil the party. Few besides Mr. R. H. S. Crossman are prepared to tell the Germans publicly that we don't trust them, and it is hard to recall similarly harsh words ever being uttered from the German side.

The remarkable organiser of these expeditions, Frau Lilo Milchsack, is as well aware as anyone of the need to prevent them from becoming a mere old boys' reunion. This year she brought in one or two new faces from a younger age-group, who often think differently from their elders. It is, however, easier to add new faces than to subtract old ones without giving offence; yet this may have to be done if the institution is to retain its vitality without growing unwieldy in size.

All in all, Koenigswinter may justly claim that it has played a part in getting Germany and Britain acquainted with one another after long estrangement. A new phase in Anglo-German relations has now opened, and a new generation is becoming important. This needs to be recognised and acted upon if a valuable institution, whose reputation is high, is to weather its second ten years.

Kenneth Younger

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Second Holland Is Not Enough

Letter to England

How cosy England is now. How pleasing, to foreign visitors! She is warm. She is comfortable. (There is now automatic oil heat in some places.) She is gentle. (Americans, Europeans, Chileans find it so, since the English people are *so* polite.) The food is so much better than before the last war. (There is even some good coffee in England.) Englishwomen look surprisingly elegant, surprisingly pretty, since the new sheathed and chemised fashions suit their Grecian necks and postures. (It is no longer just in tweeds that they look attractive.) England is relatively cheap: unlike before the last war, cheaper than Germany, Italy, France. Meanwhile the English people are, also, more cosmopolitan than ever: masses of them visit the Continent in the summer, and thick-ankled nurses from Doncaster drink Médoc wine at Paris tables. (Kensington is speckled by espressos and dives where passable French food is dispensed at impassably close tables by queer young men in blouses and women in toreador pants.) So is England more cosmopolitan, more tolerant, more European; pleasanter, politer, smoother than ever.

A second Holland, in fact? The analogies are numerous.

Holland, too, had had her place in the sun. Thereafter she was superseded by Britain just as now Britain is superseded by the United States. Britain and Holland grew friendly, just as America and Britain have become friendly after the new ascendancy was well established. Britain needed a friendly Holland for a European bridgehead just as now the United States needs Britain for a friendly aircraft carrier. What was the Channel is now the Atlantic.

There is more to it. Holland, too, had at one time "saved herself by her exertions and Europe by her example." Thereafter Holland, too, gave a rather unique example of civic virtue, religious tolerance, and reasonably good government. Like England, Holland gave up portions of her great empire with a certain degree of dignity; like Holland, England is now drawn closer to Europe because of the loss of empire. What could be cosier, more comfortable, more European than the life of a rich Hague bourgeois, say around 1730?

And the cosmopolitanism of the intellect. Leyden and Utrecht had not much of a European reputation before the 17th century; Oxford and Cambridge had even less before the 19th. The power of Holland was already beginning to fade when the reputation of her universities rose; the same thing is true of England. There is, again, a large measure of similarity between the character and effects of the French migration of liberal Huguenot intellectuals into Holland around 1685, led by Bayle, and of the migration of Central European intellectuals into England around 1938, followed by Freud: the result, in Holland, was a quickly gallicised and cosmopolitan and "enlightened" culture, and in England the emergence of a more Germanic, more "serious" kind of "intelligentsia"...

Two maritime empires, two trading empires, two middle-class empires, two Protestant empires, in dignified decline.

I mention this to my British friends with a touch of anxiety in my voice. "But of course," they answer. "Who wouldn't like to live in an 18th-century Holland?"

Still, I know that their answer is wrong. Luckily, it is also a bit false. There is a cheery tinge of flippancy in it, rather than a deep violoncello note of contented resignation.

They may know something about that cosy 18th century in the town houses of Delft and Hague. They may not know that, at the tail end of those cosy times, the French gobbled up Holland in 1795 in one motion, like soft cream cheese. They may remember what June 1940 meant for England, within England; they may not know what June 1940 meant for Europeans.

They ought to know.

The history of European Anglophilia consists of various strands, spun together by the exigencies of the 19th century into large bundles of bourgeois admiration. There is the Erasmian strand, and the thin strong silky thread woven by Montesquieu, and the sentimental Anglophilia (in reality, a Celto- and Saxonomania) of German intellectuals beginning two hundred years ago, and the liberal Latin wool spun by such diverse people as Alfieri, Cavour, Castillejo. These intellectual strands were then woven into those large ties of sentimental emulation with which, in the 19th century, large portions of the remaining European aristocracy and the majority of bourgeois patriciandom attached themselves to standards of English clothing, English sports, English habits, English expressions.

Certainly much of this Anglophilia was false and insubstantial, resting on wrong images, sometimes ludicrously wrong ones. It led, for example, to the misplaced admiration of the "stiff upper lip," in reality a Victorian middle-class habit, as if it were the epitome of aristocratic behaviour. It rested on misunderstandings of English history: to this day, in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, the adjectice "puritanical" is still commendatory rather than pejorative, suggesting honesty, courage, *noblesse oblige*. Anglophilia inspired Mavrogordatos and

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mazzinis and Kossuths with the exaggerated notion that England was The Great Liberal Power, fully in sympathy with their work in destroying old European monarchies. Anglophilia has led to an exaggerated European attribution of genius to such relatively insubstantial spirits as Wells and Shaw. And it made millions of Europeans, Polish Jews, Swiss bankers, and Hungarian noblemen believe, in 1938, that one flick of the exasperated aristocratic hand, one angry swish of the Lion's tail, and Hitler would be stopped for good, if not altogether done with. Then came Neville Chamberlain with his umbrella.

Yet we ought not dismiss this phenomenon of Anglophilia with ridicule.

In the first place, if Anglophilia was ridiculous, Anglophobia was doubly so. No propagated image of a nation is so cheap, stupid, hateful as The Nation of Shopkeepers, The Brutal Suppressors of Little Peoples, The Hypocritical Imperialists, The Judaised Banker-Vampires of The Globe. Often, during the last war, I thought how the worst enemies of Europe were warped men whose main moving spirit seemed to be their black, gnarled hatred due to some imagined slight or snub they had once received from Englishmen: Joachim von Ribbentrop is the prototypical example. Or Mazzini's successor Mussolini, who in the end told a friend that he would rather see Italy become a Soviet republic than governed by England.

In the second place, there was something sublime in some of the manifestations of Anglophilia. Much more than during Napoleon's wars, during the last war it was so obvious that the best Europeans were Anglophiles. I know: in 1940 Churchill spoke to his own people; he evoked the latent, strong, selfish, historic memories of the Island Race. Yet *we* —I know that I am not alone—knew and felt that he spoke for all of us, Europeans, Christians, free men from everywhere. In that war there were tens of thousands of Europeans, and not merely *déraciné* Europeans, from Belgian bankers to Greek tobacco-workers, who struggled and died for England.

In the third place, what was always sublime was not the often mistaken image of England or of Englishmen but the image of English virtues. In an age of vulgarity, lying, mass treachery, we thought the qualities of nobility to be represented by the virtues of England. We may have confused honesty with fairness,* beauty with form, incorruptibility with self-control, elegance with smartness, intelligence with common sense; but, in 1940, England stood for us as the Last Hope of Europe, indeed, the Hope of Mankind: courageous, elegant, aristocratic, disdainful. I say "aristocratic" because, no matter how much I admire Orwell, I cannot sympathise with his anger when during the Blitz he wrote that "the lady in the Rolls-Royce car is more damaging to morale than a fleet of Goering's bombing-planes." I remember cold deep nights in Budapest, in 1944, when we were cowering in a cellar while the city was bombed. I had a copy of *The Times*, perused to tatters, left to us some time before by a neutral traveller. On the back page there was a photo of some kind of a reception, with smart English women in print dresses, with a gleam of silver and English flowers and motor-cars in the background. Between Nazi and Soviet armies, amidst the muck and dirt and murder, it was exhilarating to think that elegance and style and manners and decency and *noblesse oblige* were manifestly visible, that they prevailed, somewhere, beyond the heavy rubberised smoke of Germany, in London.

It was exhilarating; and in a peculiar, European way, it was sublime. And this is why I consider the Angry Young Men to be ludicrous idiots. But here I think that George Orwell would agree.

England becoming a mechanised Second Holland, governed by a bureaucracy of intellectuals: it may seem enough to certain people in England. It is not enough for the world. Holland defeated or absorbed: a sad sight, a deplorable sight, something falling out from the European order. England defeated or absorbed: the world would be permanently poorer, never the same.

IN these years, all over the world, the texture of history is changing; and with it changes the structure of events. In this age, when Tendencies are beginning to supersede Facts, it is peculiarly true that great movements are surprisingly gradual; the movement of ideas is slow; and the most important movements of popular sentiment are hardly visible on the surface. Also, despite mass travel, airplane age, United Europe, United Nations, there is reason to believe that nations are growing more, and not less, homogeneous. The main strands of national character are beginning to count. The real undercurrents are beginning to appear. And here are some good signs for the English future. I believe that there are hopeful undercurrents in England today.

In the first place, the relative decline of the Puritan element in English life. The inheritor of Puritanism is, of course, Labour, and the residues are strongest in the working-class habits of the Midlands; but consider how much less puritanical was Bevin than Macdonald (or, since this transcends classes as well as Englishness, take two Celts: Bevan than Bonar Law). There are many signs in England that the false evangelical fervour that has soured the food on English tables and the generosity in English hearts is getting faintly disreputable; it may vanish; even the present vulgarity of English mass culture has a touch of healthy bawdiness in it. (There is something harsh and steely and neo-Gothic and Puritanical in the crew-cuts and the tight sharp blue jeans and the black leather jackets affected by American juveniles; there is nothing of the kind in the fake-Edwardian attire of the Teddy Boys.) And consider how, for the first time in perhaps three hundred years, the Royal Family has been criticised, here and there, *not* for being too haughty, proud, or licentious but for being too dowdy, too much in conformity with the middle-class image.

In the second place, there is the relative decline

* The distinctions are important: i.e., the Spanish are honest but not fair, the English are fair rather than honest.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Germanic element in English politics. This ties in closely with the history of English Puritanism from those 17th-century Puritans who extolled the "Saxon" past, wishing to eliminate the aristocratic element brought in by the Norman "intruders," all the way to the Germanophilia of that fraudulent Tory, Joseph Chamberlain.* There is reason to believe today that the English may be permanently cured of Carlyleism and of Teutonomania.

In the third place, there is the possible decline of the transatlantic attraction. This attraction, of course, is still very evident. Yet I believe that, by and large, it has passed its peak, as not only America but Canada and Australia and New Zealand become less and less English, and as England becomes more and more European. (In this way the gradual abandonment of Empire may be a boon for Europe, in disguise.)

I believe that deep down these are the three basic conflicts running through the history of the English spirit: between the Puritan and the cavalier inclination (the lower-case "c" is intentional); between the relatively Germanophile Saxon and the relatively Francophile Norman inclination; between the transoceanic and the European inclination. I believe that England and Europe and, through them, the whole world will but gain by the relative ascendancy of the latter at the expense of the former elements.

There are some bad signs, however.

In the first place, there is this inclination among the best of Englishmen to rest content with the prospects of their country becoming a Second Holland.

In the second place, there is something forced in the present tendency to exaggerate the claims of some kind of neo-Elizabethan revival. It is true that there are symptoms of health, and even of buoyancy. But the tone of the newspapers as they batten on some British success in international sporting events is strained, strident, nervous, which suggests that the self-confidence behind it is assertive and forced: that is, not genuinely English.

In the third place, there is an un-English bitterness and, on occasion, a touch of almost Gallic surliness, in the present habits of Englishmen and Englishwomen when they criticise Americans, Germans, Irish. It has the un-English touch of the Bad Loser. It stands out especially in this now so cosy, so polite England. Nor is it that rudeness which used to shock foreign visitors during long centuries, that peculiar English rudeness to foreigners, issuing from nonchalance and from racial self-confidence. *This* is bitterness rather than rudeness; its springs are uneasiness rather than nonchalance; it is not a mark of self-confidence.

Perhaps deep down, instinctively and not yet consciously, Englishmen and Englishwomen feel that there is a great coming crisis that might shake up everything. This concerns the Protestant character of England.

There are many signs that we are now living through the end of a period in history, a period that has lasted for about five hundred years, a period that may be termed, with various degrees of justification, The Secular Age; The Political Age; The Age of Reason; The Bourgeois Age; The Protestant Age. It was during these five hundred years that England rose to her greatest power. The question is this: Isn't, therefore, the decline of England foreordained? Weren't her fortunes part and parcel of the now dwindling assets of this now passing Age? Now there are reasons to believe that this is not so; that the marvellous, instinctive flexibility of English common sense will prevail, and transcend these categories. For the English middle class was never typically bourgeois; English politicians were not systematists; English writers were always poets rather than Rationalist Intellectuals. But England *is* deeply Protestant. Or, rather, anti-Catholic.

I know many Englishmen, and I mean now not radical intellectuals but Englishmen and Englishwomen of the upper classes, who would rather be Marxist or Moslem than Catholic. Maybe this is the last surviving, obstinate nugget of Puritanism in their hearts. Yet the tie between England and Protestantism is not *that* vital. I am Catholic, and I know how one can love England, apart from the Protestant touch and the red-brick touch and all that fake-Victorian nonsense about "Bluff King Hal." (I even sympathise, in a way, with some of my English friends, since every so often I prefer Protestants to Catholics. . . . But not Protestantism to Catholicism). For a long time the English have succeeded in being Protestant without being Puritan; the Church of England has been a miracle of compromise. But the Church of England may be slowly dying. And no nation can be great without some living religious fibre within her. And my questions are these: How will a secularised and irreligious England fare in a world where the power of the churches is, again, on the increase? How will an anti-Catholic England fare in a "Western" world dominated by her erstwhile racial and religious cousins, America and Germany, both growing Catholic now?

---

* For some time now I have believed that a key date in the history of English politics is 1873, when Chamberlain was elected Mayor of Birmingham, a date connected with the beginnings of mechanical mass organisation of British politics, with the introduction of American and German techniques. It was Joseph Chamberlain who introduced the "caucus" into British politics; and his early mentor and political adviser was a German, Schnadhorst.

THIS article was begun in the panamerican airport of Shannon where, on a late, light evening I sat, fidgeting and waiting for long hours for my airplane which was to carry me back to the United States. Through that angular bazaar of a hangar streamed hundreds and hundreds of American soldiers and airmen in uniform, with their somewhat seedy, full-throated wives, with their children bawling and running about late at night between the stacks of overcut Waterford glass and overembroidered Irish linen. This was an American colony, with a touch of Lufthansa.

For Shannon is already an American colony, an American outpost, plastered onto the edge of Europe; and it is, of course, much more American than British or European. This transcends the fact

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that there is no official American base in Eire, that Eire is "neutral," not part of NATO, or that Ireland, after all, is still geographically and racially part of the British Isles. In certain ways, Ireland is closer to America than to Europe; she is not Europe; she is the potential outpost of a Far Western Civilisation that, on the occasion of some future schism, may threaten England and Europe together. . . . No, Shannon is one of those places which show how large parts of the world are becoming panamerican. The panamerican voice of the loudspeaker system, with hardly an Irish accent; the American smell of it all. It is like that other panamerican invention, the United Nations, a panamerican plastic pimple on the big brute flank of New York.

But, most panamerican inventions were British in their far origins. It was the Puritan English Revolution of the 17th and not the enlightened French Revolution of the 18th that influenced the radical American spirit enduringly. That English Revolution had almost no effects on Europe; but, curiously enough, it is now, through America, that the effects of that Revolution are returning to Europe, and to the world. Anti-slavery; the Wilsonian ideology; national self-determination; the United Nations; world government; anti-colonialism; international legal bodies; Point Four—at their sources these were ideas of British radicalism, from Puritans to Labour. Now they are panamerican and, on occasion, dangerously revolutionary instruments.

It was, of course, a Labour Government which one day in February 1947 simply turned to Washington and said: "Pick up the tab; we can no longer afford to support Turkey and Greece." Out of that the Truman Doctrine resulted which, at any rate, made much more sense than the Eisenhower Doctrine; still, in a way, the British failure at Suez was but a straight consequence of this first abandonment of traditional responsibilities in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is also true that this was symptomatic of that weakening of the will which marks the decline of great men, of great families, of great nations: for the only things we cannot afford are those that we really don't want to afford. Yet here the Tories may have sinned more than Labour, at least in recent decades. The radical, sentimental, puritanical, and almost American inclinations of British radicalism ever since Wilkes and Bright are now transcended by the modern condition that the rich people of Britain, from Northcliffe to Eden, have been ever ready to acquiesce in American leadership over Europe, and to do everything to avoid a "break" between London and Washington. It was not before the threat of Russian rockets that Anthony Eden flinched. It was before the raucous telephone voice of a weak American President.

This is why such large portions of the globe are now becoming panamerican. But it is against this tightening thin wiremesh, against this plastic film of panamericanism that we all, Europeans, European-Americans, Americans need the strong living breath of Britain. Yes, even Americans: for there is a difference between being American and being panamerican. Britain still has, and should never give up, her European rôle. But she also has an American rôle which is exemplary rather than political: it is to show Americans that dynamism and expansion aren't everything but that resilience and resistance, together with tradition, may mean more in the long run.

They ought to know that even the spectacle of a surly and recalcitrant Britain may impress the American people more favourably than all those repetitions about "the loyal ally," so often covering up only the gracious subservience of the frayed aristocratic pensioner. They ought to know that the desire to please (very different from that other thing, the wish to be loved) is something that Americans do not, and never did, understand since, by and large, they are suspicious of superior manners; but that Americans still comprehend the manifestations of manly self-confidence. They ought to know that there are, still, many Americans who are not panamericans. For the sake of these Americans, too, a Second Holland is not enough.

J. A. Lukacs

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Housecarl in Loyola's Menie

By Hilary Corke

THERE is a current myth, still not scotched, about the publishing of Gerard Manley Hopkins, nor will the present completion* of his "Collected Works" go far to scotch it. This myth (glib and ungenerous even as these things go) is to the effect that Robert Bridges held on to the manuscripts of the poems for thirty years without at all realising their quality; and that, when he was finally persuaded to publish, he seized the opportunity to pen a long patronising and impercipient introduction which did the worst for the poems that it could. It is a view that will stand up to neither common-sense nor hard fact, and yet one hears it sufficiently often. This is not the place for a refutation; but a brief unargued rehearsal of a few of the relevant considerations may serve to remind the reader. Thus, when Hopkins died in 1889, so far from being the renowned Laureate-figure Bridges had not published publicly a single volume of verse, and his sponsorship would have carried no weight whatever. Again, though critical in part —and what craftsman was ever wholly uncritical of the work of another?—Bridges was responsible for the saving of the manuscripts and the fact that to-day we (apparently) have every line of verse that the mature poet ever wrote. Bridges was perfectly aware that his friend was going to be a classic; he carefully collected every letter, every scrap of writing, remarking "these will all be needed later." Then again Bridges did not "sit on" the manuscripts. He managed to get poems included in a number of anthologies, and the overwhelming rounds of silence with which they were greeted showed only too clearly the fate that would have awaited them as a collection. It was only in 1915, when he published his own anthology, *The Spirit of Man*, and was able to include a properly representative selection, that public interest was first faintly stirred. Publication of the *Poems* soon followed, in 1917, and if the public had only been waiting for this moment they certainly showed no over-eagerness when it came. The tiny edition of 750 took ten years to sell, settling down after the first few months to a steady rate of thirty copies a year. And suppose Hopkins had lived, and he and Bridges had grown old together? It is morally certain that then at any rate no question of publication would have ever arisen; the poet's own tragically equivocal attitude to his work would have seen to that. It is possible to disagree with Bridges' decision (even if a volume in 1889 had found only one reader, that reader might nevertheless have been precisely he who most needed it); but not to disrespect it. It is quite probable that the course he pursued was the very best one possible for the safeguarding of Hopkins' reputation; just as it is equally probably that one (and this he would have cared for not at all) which was the unluckiest for his own.

As far as the present volumes are concerned the myth would remark that Hopkins' Notebooks were first, and last, published in 1937 and have since become so downright out-of-print as to rank as almost legendary. Just as an earlier generation was denied the poetry for twenty-nine years, so a generation to-day has been denied the prose (apart from rare copies in libraries and a good but necessarily insufficient volume of selections) for twenty-two. It is true, and it is regrettable, but it is not without due cause. In the first place the volume of 1937 was itself only a selection, and it was felt that the time had come for everything—diaries, journals, lecture-notes, sermons—to be published *in toto*. Then in 1947

* *The Journals and Papers of G. M. H.* Edited by HUMPHREY HOUSE. Completed by GRAHAM STOREY. Oxford University Press. 63s.

The Sermons and Devotional Writings of G. M. H. Edited by CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN, S.J. Oxford University Press. 42s.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

three new volumes of the "Journal" were discovered at Farm Street, entailing revision of plans and much extra work. Next, incredible as it might seem, Hopkins' last surviving brother lived on until 1952 (he was ninety-seven), and only then was it possible to examine the family papers for new material. And finally, with his work only three-quarters done, Humphrey House himself died suddenly in 1955, leaving it to Mr. Graham Storey to complete the arduous work.

And arduous it must most certainly have been. In all his editors, from Bridges onwards, Hopkins has been extraordinarily fortunate, and the annotation, both in *The Journals* and *The Sermons*, is of an exemplary thoroughness behind which must lie untold hours of patient and ingenious enquiry. The matter undoubtedly required it. The journals and diaries in particular are replete with passages like

> July 9. Fine. At French and Belgian exhibition. Interesting to remember Daubigny's suggestive and *sombre* landscape (a view of Villerville and a river-scene) not unlike Crome. Compare, too, Tissot's *Spring* (curiously like in motive) with Millais', and Baron Leys and Lagye his pupil with our mediævalists. All their colouring "sleepy."

This is of biographical, not literary importance, but clearly, if it *is* to be printed, then it will require half a dozen notes. It gets them. There are indeed of necessity so many notes that one might well use *The Journals* as a supplementary reference-book of the late mid-Victorian period: but they are all "honest" notes—that is to say, elucidations of fact not airings of opinion. Fr. Christopher Devlin's editing of *The Sermons* is necessarily less mechanical but especially valuable in that it is the informed and humane commentary of one Jesuit upon the religious thinking of another.

Now that the whole (or almost the whole) of Hopkins is in print, it is the right moment to take a general survey of what he has left. Six volumes hold it: *The Poems*; *The Letters to Bridges*; *The Dixon Correspondence*; *The Further Letters* (of which the second edition includes the family letters discovered in 1952); and the two volumes under review. These last are essentially a greatly expanded re-issue, in two volumes, of the old *Notebooks* of 1937. In *The Journals* we have first the "Early Diaries," now printed complete (with a single serious exception, which I note later): these are mostly of only personal interest, but there are some five hundred lines of previously unprinted early verse —most of it, however, no more than moderate. Then there are the "Journals," including the three new volumes, about which something should now be said. These are earlier than the volumes previously known and of less than half their length. If we did not already know the later parts, they would be considered remarkable; as it is, they must be confessed to be less realised, less fine. They include the same meticulous descriptions of natural objects in which Ruskin is their writer's only rival; but the tools are not yet at command, the terms are dark and mistakable.

> I have now found the law of the oak leaves. It is of platter-shaped stars altogether; the leaves lie close like pages, packed, and as if drawn tightly to. But these old packs, which lie at the end of their twigs, throw out now long shoots alternately and slimly leaved, looking like bright keys. All the sprays but markedly these ones shape out and as it were embrace greater circles and the dip and toss of these make the wider and less organic articulations of the tree.

That is obviously the product of a splendid mind. But to one reader at least it conveys more shadow than light. There is nothing here in these earlier volumes to equal the later description of the criss-crossing of the waves at Douglas or the miraculously sustained passages on the bluebells

> in falls of sky-colour washing the brows and slacks of the ground with vein-blue.

Finally, there are "Lecture Notes," "Undergraduate Essays" (some written for Pater), a long section on Hopkins' drawings with a very generous selection of reproductions, and a similar section on his music with all his extant settings printed.

There is, as I hinted, one omission; and I believe it is a serious one. Mr. Storey has decided, "after discussion with interested people and other lovers of Hopkins," to print none of the "notes of daily self-examination" in the Early Diaries. More food for the myth. Surely, in the long run, this decision is not defensible. If we are interested in Hopkins as a poet, we are interested only a little less in him as a person. In his relations with his friends, still more in his tortured relations with himself, Hopkins stands as a very key to one of the mysteries, that classic combination of the puritan and the sensual which we find also in Milton but in purer as well as in more modern form in the 19th-century poet. It is right that we should wish to know as much as possible about these things and right therefore that nothing should be withheld from us. As it is, Hopkins curiously denies us himself in his journals; and the only two extracts from the confession-notes here printed ("Nothing read, not very culpable perhaps, but chiefly through going to Bridges in the evening;" and "Foolish gossipy

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

way with Bridges") tell us plainly at once what we were only free to suspect before: that Bridges represented for him the principle of temptation, irreligion, was the Devil's advocate if not the Devil. The coexistence of this religious repulsion and the tremendous poetic attraction accounts for the strange tension always underlying the Bridges-Hopkins' friendship—a tension proceeding as much from Bridges as the other, for no man likes to be regarded by his best friend as dogmatically doomed to damnation. (One must always bitterly regret, incidentally, Bridges' destruction of his own side of the correspondence; there, and there only, was the disservice that he did to his friend.) From everything that we know of Hopkins, too, we may be utterly certain that nothing in these notes could be to his discredit—it may be remembered, for instance, that we have the similar confessions of Johnson and think all the better of him for them. Publication will certainly take place sooner or later: it would have been better now.

Of *The Sermons* I feel less able, or qualified, to speak. Of many of the beliefs on which such a book is founded I find *what* is believed horrible and *that* it is believed unbelievable. Hopkins takes hell-pains literally, for instance, and lingers upon them with 17th-century concern:

> In that flame then see them now. They have no bodies there, flame is the body that they wear. You have seen a glass-blower breathe on a flame; at once it darts out into a jet taper as a lance-head and as piercing too. The breath of God's anger first kindled the fire of hell; it strikes with a distinct indignation still on each distinct unforgiven sin; the wretched soul starts into a flame that has some frightful and fantastic likeness to its sin; so sinners are themselves the flames of hell.

If we found it in the works of Donne or of Taylor we should (divided by comfortable centuries) admire with open heart. Coming from the 19th century it gives us pause. One must add that it also gave Hopkins' superiors pause. He was (poor man) "in a manner suspended" for using the word *sweetheart* in a sermon in cleanly Liverpool. And what, one wonders, would an audience of honest mechanics have made of

> *We shall die in these bodies.* I see you living before me, with the mind's eye, brethren, I see your corpses: those same bodies that sit there before me are rows of corpses that will be. And I that speak to you, you hear and see me, you see me breathe and move: this breathing body is my corpse and I am living in my tomb. This is one thing certain of your place of death; you are there now, you sit within your corpses; look no farther: there where you are you will die.

Special pleading, but magnificent special pleading—even though one is sometimes reminded of the verdict of his colleague Br. Marchant: "He was not always judicious in his sermons; once he compared the Church to a milk cow and the tits to the seven sacraments. But great genius must be excused eccentricities." One thing at any rate emerges as one reads through these sermons, and the long annotations on Loyola's *Exercises*, and the notes made in retreat: Hopkins is a whole man. It is not possible, though those who do not share his tenets may try hard to achieve it, it is not possible to divide off the poet from the religious and simply to close one's eyes and mind on what the religious believes and says. If, as one may feel, the result is that the man "dwindles into a Jesuit," that is a risk to be taken.

Over the past month I have read more or less the whole of Hopkins, a task which the splendid typography and editing of the Oxford volumes has made all the more pleasant; and I suppose I might be tempted to deliver myself of some sort of general appraisal. But no, thank you, no, no. Everyone nowadays, I imagine (with the exception of a few Bournemouth voters, *Times* reviewers, Hairy Ainus, etc.), is sufficiently convinced of the nature and quality of Hopkins' genius as a poet. Let me conclude rather with a few scattered observations (of which my opening paragraph may stand as the first):

2. If we did not have the poems, we could only think of Hopkins as a brilliant but hopeless amateur. Evidence of his false starts in all directions litters almost every page of both letters and journal. There are his philological speculations, ingenious enough but quite uninstructed, witnesses indeed of wasted hours. His drawings are meticulous and deeply pondered but in the event what may be found in many a Victorian album. His music, on which he lavished most of the rare leisure of his latter years, is mildly adventurous but in effect so minor an achievement that one can only weep for the major poems that were abandoned in favour of it. Even much of his thought may be called "amateurish"—the curiously naïve quality of his patriotism, for instance. The whole thing is a tragically common phenomenon, the naturally artistic temperament lacking the art by which it might be expressed—the frustration, the dogmatism, the occasional childish glee. And yet when we turn to the poems all falls suddenly into place. The philology becomes

> *Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;*
> *And all is seared with trade.*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The anxiously accurate "sketch from nature" becomes

some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood,
Southern dene or Lancashire clough or Devon cleave,
That leans along the loins of hills, where a candy-coloured, where a gluegold-brown
Marbled river, boisterously beautiful, between
Roots and rocks is danced and dandled, all in froth and water-blowballs, down.

And the sense of musical rhythm and counterpoint underlies every line he wrote.

3. His abstention from poetry (which he *must* have known secretly was his one true worldly good) is a deliberate attempt at unworldly perfection. This is evident from a key passage (in the *Loyola* notes) on "the great sacrifice"—a passage acutely marked down by Fr. Devlin:

> [Christ] could not but see what he was, God, but he would see it as if he did not see it, and be as if he were not and instead of snatching at once what all the time was his, or was himself, he emptied or exhausted himself so far as that was possible, of godhead.... It is this holding of himself back, and not snatching at the truest and highest good, the good that was his right, nay his possession from a past eternity in his other nature, his own being and self, which seems to me the root of all his holiness and *the imitation of this the root of all moral good in other men.* [my italics.]

4. Hopkins' goodness, though utterly genuine, was nevertheless of the sort that tends to incommode other people—his spiritual "duty to himself" took all precedence over his social duty to his fellows. Thus he cannot stay with his beloved correspondent Dixon because he feels he will be unable to say Mass in the house of a Protestant Canon. Add to this his opinionatedness, his serene conviction of being invariably in the right of it, and the character that emerges is distinctly prickly and even unattractive in certain aspects. One may well shudder at the terrible coldness of his letters to his father when the latter attempted to dissuade him from his conversion—all head and no heart. Poor sane, level-headed, mature Bridges had a thoroughly difficult time when Gerard decided that he ought to be converted too, to Christianity if not to Catholicism; of course it did not enter his head (indeed *a principiis could* not enter his head) that Bridges' clear and carefully thought-out humanism might be just as valid a creed as his own.

Different friends reacted differently to the spiritual and intellectual arrogance of the man. Canon Dixon, a sweetly good soul if ever there was one, took him at his face value: so did Patmore, a woolly man, exclaiming in some trepidation at "the *authority* of his goodness." Bridges saw through it to the prisoner crying for help from within and was gentle accordingly. Not so the charming old Irish Professor of Music to whom Hopkins had taken a composition for criticism:

> DARLING PADRE!... Indeed I *cannot* follow you through your maze of words in your letter of last week. I saw, ere we had conversed ten minutes on our first meeting, that you are one of those special pleaders who never believe yourself wrong in any respect. You always excuse yourself for anything I object to in your writing or music so I think it a pity to disturb you in your happy dreams of perfect ability—nearly everything in your music was wrong—but you will not admit that to be the case—What does it matter? It will all be the same 100 Years hence.

Coming upon this at the end of so much high-seriousness upon the flying trapeze of conscience, we let out a great *Oof!* of laughter.

Robert Bridges should have the last word. In his life-time Hopkins had done all the preaching, all the pleading. But half a century later, Gerard's poems now some ten years safely out in print, the old man wrote in that astonishing production of his 'eighties:

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When the young poet my companion in study
and friend of my heart refused a peach at my hands,
he being then a housecarl in Loyola's menie,
'twas that he fear'd the savor of it, and when he waived
his scruple to my banter, 'twas to avoid offence.
But I, upon thatt day which after fifty years
is near as yesterday, was no stranger to fear
of pleasure, but had grown fearful of thatt fear.

Hilary Corke

Portrait of Joyce as Friend

Our Friend James Joyce. By MARY and PADRAIC COLUM. *Gollancz.* 16s.

THIS is certainly the *nicest* memoir of Joyce that has yet been written, for he was a man, whatever else may be said of him as a man, who aroused hostility as well as affection. More than twenty years ago I was taken round Gogarty's famous Dublin garden by its owner, and I remember how he would pause here and there to say: "And this was Yeats's favourite spot" or "A. E. and Synge had many an argument on this seat." But I, being young and impatiently single-minded, asked: "And where did Joyce sit?" Buck Mulligan's original lost his smile at once. "James Joyce was not a gentleman!" he muttered, and led us quickly indoors.

But he aroused no such feelings in the two delightful authors of this book. Neither of them is a subservient person, but each seems to have accepted without question that Joyce was one of those rare characters who have an indisputable right to make exceptional demands on their friends. Joyce had no high-falutin theory about the special privileges of genius; but he knew that he had a great work to be done and he thought it right that others should serve it with something of the devotion which he himself was giving to it. The Colums appear to have agreed with him. We can see, from their modest yet witty and clear-eyed account, that they must have been excellent friends; and they have given a further proof of their friendship by showing us aspects of Joyce's life and character which no one has shown us before.

We knew already about Joyce's pride and wit, his courage and his capacity for unconscious cruelty. We knew much less about his perpetual concern for the well-being of his friends, his courtliness and that curiously childlike and innocent quality which seems to have been possessed by so many of the greatest men. "Joyce spoke with dislike," Mrs. Colum tells us, "of the well-known official psychologists, but it did not take much penetration to perceive how much he had been affected by them. He himself was a man of rather simple psychology, with simple reactions, but with a very complex mind and imagination...." I cannot remember to have read any sentence on Joyce's character more illuminating than this last one. At its worst this simplicity was that of a foolish child. "He had conceived," writes Padraic Colum, "the *idée fixe* that I knew the secret of the Dublin publisher's and printer's rejection of *Dubliners* and that there was some Church or State reason for my keeping my mouth closed." There was, of course, not a word of truth in this supposition, but Joyce believed it, against all the evidence of Colum's kindness and candour, up to the day of his death. On another occasion he had decided, quite wrongly again, that his good friend Sylvia Beach of the Shakespeare Head was making a huge profit on *Ulysses* and that the Joyce family was not getting its due. The following scene then occurred:

> On Saint Patrick's Day Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier got together with Joyce's special friends to give him a grand dinner in a restaurant, each guest contributing to the expense. Joyce said he would order for himself, and what the waiter brought him was a dish of lentils.... I have come to think he was childishly showing he was "out" with Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier.

The other side of this curious aspect of Joyce is the kind of impregnable sincerity which he showed from one end of his life to the other. He was always himself alone and never made the slightest effort to appear, or to be, anything else. Here are a few illustrations of this quality, which mark Joyce out so signally from other famous writers of our time.

> His aversion to aggressiveness, turbulence, violence of any kind was quite deeply felt.... He was not only dismayed at the thought of crime, he had no interest in it, and said he found this a handicap in writing *Work in Progress*; a book that dealt with the night-life of humanity should, he felt, have some reference to crime in it, but he could not bring himself to put any in.
>
> He thinks it a waste of time to discuss what are called "ideas." I once asked him what a well-known sophisticated writer talks about when with him. "Ideas," Joyce said, and his tone suggested that he was not very much entertained by the conversation.

> In spite of his having broken with the Catholic faith, Joyce had not, as far as I could know, any of what are called Bohemian qualities or unconventionalities, that is if one leaves out of account his occasional heavy drinking. He was scrupulously moral and ethically above reproach. In spite of his visits to Nighttown in his student

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and post-student days in Dublin, he had fixed ideas of faithfulness in marriage, and nothing shocked him more than to hear that somebody he knew was committing adultery.

In the context of all this it seems perfectly natural that Joyce should always have addressed his friends by their surnames. For what emerges is of a man who never made the least effort to be "up-to-date," and retained in many ways an instinctively old-fashioned attitude to life and behaviour. His attitude to crime is of peculiar interest when one thinks of all that weary attitudinising on the other side of the Channel which has led, among so many other absurdities, to the apotheosis of the Marquis de Sade. And very typical, too, was that quite long period in Joyce's life when his overriding interest was the propulsion into fame of the Irish tenor, Sullivan. Another *idée fixe*, but in this case a most generous obsession.

This is a short book, and there were long periods of Joyce's life when the Colums saw nothing of him. We learn nothing here, for example, about his life in Zurich or Trieste. Yet we do, I think, learn more about the character of Joyce in this little book than from several of the longer ones.

Philip Toynbee

Whose Accent?

Australian Accent. By JOHN DOUGLAS PRINGLE. *Chatto and Windus.* 18s.

JOHN PRINGLE'S book is a highly personal account of modern Australia by a sympathetic but critical admirer "who lived there for five years and nearly settled there for ever." Mr. Pringle obviously liked Australia, and was obviously glad to leave. Indeed, his book has the same ultra-critical, sometimes peevish, tone that some Australians use to describe Britain, when, after happy exile there, they return home and rationalise their reasons for doing so. In Australia this attitude has been happily described as "the inverted cultural cringe," in contrast to "the direct cringe," which manifests itself in exaggerated admiration for British achievement. Its unfortunate effect on most Australian intellectuals who have lived in Britain is to make them permanently expatriate: in Australia, thinking of Britain; in Britain, thinking of Australia; and thus not quite happy or adjusted in either community. Australians working abroad do not differ from the British in romanticising home; but by mixing their desire for brighter sun and better beer with imagined calls to duty, they complicate both exile and repatriation in a way the British seldom do.

Mr. Pringle, an Anglo-Scot, should be able to write more objectively about Australia than an Australian can about Britain, but emigration is always a painful emotional experience, leading to confusion of values; and the particular problem of the British emigrant in Australasia, in contrast to anywhere else in the world, is that there he *expects* "a replica of England," and any such expectation is bound to be, at least in the short run, disillusioning. Mr. Pringle, one suspects, never quite recovered from the *astonishment* of finding that the Australians were neither British, nor even American, but "above all... Australian." "It is indeed an astonishing thing," he writes, "how strong a character Australia has." This astonishment led Mr. Pringle to investigate the Australian character, both for his fellow-Britishers, partly no doubt as a guide to future emigrants, and in the belief "that it is high time that Britain should take more seriously this young and vigorous country"; and also for Australians, in the hope perhaps that it would help them understand themselves (including their deficiencies), and in the mistaken belief that "Australians, who like other people, dislike criticism intensely, are now mature enough to take it."

British reviews of Mr. Pringle have been laudatory; Australian reviews have ranged from the lukewarm to the abusive. The British, indeed, are taking the book too seriously, and the Australians are too excited by its criticisms. Neither reaction is new. The British have always taken Australia seriously, at least those who count for anything: parliamentarians and public servants, merchants and manufacturers, the men of the city, and anyone interested in cricket and other games of skill. A long line of writers from Darwin to Pringle demonstrate the fact. But Mr. Pringle, and the success of his book, is as much the manifestation of *increasing* British interest in Australia, as the stimulator of it. At a time when doubts about empire are universal, and when Australia is increasingly independent in economy and politics, the British see the Commonwealth as the last vestige of imperial greatness, and the Australians as the only uncomplicated adherents to Britain and her way of life.

The Australian reaction to Mr. Pringle also has long precedent, and, moreover, is firmly based on the real weakness of this book. In one of Henry Lawson's short stories, an Australian abroad describes his country as "the worst country that ever the Lord had the sense to forget... A big, thirsty, hungry wilderness... popu-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lated mostly by mongrel sheep, and partly by fools, who live like European slaves in the town, and like dingoes in the bush." When an innocent Britisher agrees with this tirade, the Australian turns in fury to the foreigner and questions his right to criticise. Most Australians would regard it as presumptuous of Mr. Pringle to criticise Australia, but intelligent Australians would resent rather the way in which he criticises. They would argue that the two outstanding features of this book are its lack of seriousness and its lack of novelty. As a volume of light-hearted essays, full of entertainment and generalisations—many perceptive, some irresponsible, and all lively, provocative, and well-written—the book is excellent; it has the best qualities of high-level journalism, interesting and opinionated, and selective but significant in its information; but it is *not* the serious socio-political study that the author intends it to be. Most surprising, however, is its failure to say anything new. Mr. Pringle, in spite of five years in the strategic position of editor of Australia's leading newspaper in Australia's leading city, makes the same observations and generalisations, displays the same interests and prejudices, as other British writers on Australia.

The focal bias is British: Australia is described, her society and politics analysed, her culture valued, all with the measuring tape of an Oxford-educated middle-class Britisher of the class long accustomed to judge the rest of the world in terms of its own *particular* values. Nowhere is this more evident than in Mr. Pringle's attitude towards Australian speech, where his reactions are described—"One never quite gets over the shock of hearing some lovely girl speak for the first time"—without any attempt to explain the particular phonetic quality, or the social and geographic uniformity, of Australian speech. Instead of shuddering at *the* Australian accent, it would have been more valuable to ask why accent has no social significance in Australia, or why Australia is the most prolific source of slang among the English-speaking members of the Commonwealth. To call a book *Australian Accent*, to draw particular attention to alleged deficiencies in the ability to discourse privately and debate publicly, and to ignore the strength and pithiness of Australian everyday speech, its richness for satire, humour, and abuse with brevity, can only be explained by Mr. Pringle's inability to listen and understand. Similarly with the environment. Mr. Pringle has the usual British reaction of being intimidated by its size, and of being baffled by its character. He agrees with Lawrence that the land is "too big for the people" and argues that "the white man seems an incongruous invader, huddling in cities on the edge of this time-worn con-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tinent." But this is an outside-view (similar to that of the Australian who finds Britain crowded) and is not shared, for example, by Americans who come from a country of similar size to Australia. It is the failure to comprehend size, moreover, that prompts Mr. Pringle to write about "the curious uniformity of the Australian landscape" (*uniform* being also an adjective used by Australians to describe the English countryside), instead of about large blocs of landscape of vastly differing character, from tropical rain-forests to alps, from deserts to rice-fields.

Mr. Pringle comes closest to understanding and sympathising with Australia in his chapter on Sydney (where he lived and worked for five years). Not only does Sydney inspire his best writing, but it conveys, with the use of a brilliant analogy of Sydney character with its dominant winds, a lasting impression of a great and beautiful city and its not-so-pleasant inhabitants. Indeed, it is marred only by the silly idea in the concluding paragraph that Australians still have memories of the convict era, and "resentment against those who caused it." But of all the chapters, those on politics are undoubtedly the most serious. Here Mr. Pringle had a grandstand seat to observe, and the result is an excellent analysis of contemporary politics, with shrewd and unflattering sketches of Mr. Menzies and Dr. Evatt. Undoubtedly the chapter on labour politics will be the most interesting to British readers. It is important in the understanding of Australian social and political life to know that Australia is about 25 per cent Catholic, that the Catholic vote was, until recently, predominantly Labour, and that the Labour Party still is, except in the Federal Parliament, dominated by Catholics. In the past, however, Catholic intervention has been generally unobtrusive, but when the Catholic Social Movement came under the control of the ambitious but politically obtuse Mr. Santamaria, trouble was inevitable. Thus Mr. Pringle exaggerates Dr. Evatt's rôle in the present split in the Labour Party. The relationship between the unions and the party has always been intimate, and the attempt of Mr. Santamaria to control the unions was sooner or later bound to precipitate a struggle for control of the Labour Party itself. Dr. Evatt only made a bad situation worse. Mr. Pringle is contemptuous of the general character of Australian politics, but here he is less than fair, being more concerned with the standards of public speaking than with what has been achieved by the Commonwealth Government since the war in such matters as immigration, national development, education, and foreign affairs.

It is on Australian society and culture, however, that Mr. Pringle is the most entertaining and the most misleading. In trying to describe the special characteristics of the Australian, Mr. Pringle writes that they are tough, kindly, intolerant, generous, sardonic, sceptical, gullible, quick to take offence, willing to give offence, pugnacious, ready to help people in distress, dreadfully complacent, courageous, downright honest, uniform, disrespectful of law and authority, callous towards animals, possessed of a famous inferiority complex, outwardly friendly and genial, full of inner reserve, indifferent, contemptuous of material possessions, lacking in intellectual curiosity, etc. National characteristics are difficult to analyse, but this catalogue of adjectives, many of them conflicting, confuses rather than enlightens. The Australian character can be described and explained best from Australian history. Australians are democratic and egalitarian because their country is new, without peasantry or aristocracy or large native population; because their living standards have always been high, without the need for a depressed and exploited class; and because manhood suffrage for a hundred years has legally embedded equality in Australian institutions and economic relationships. Moreover, good food and plenty of sunshine on the one hand, and frontier con-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ditions demanding initiative and resourcefulness on the other, have produced a physically robust and mentally alert people who will "have a go" at most things, and do many very well. Also, most Australians—in spite of Mr. Pringle's claims that the grazier alone lives "a life that is indigenous, unique, free, and thoroughly Australian"—are coastal city dwellers, and have always been so, because most of Australia is desert and even the vast areas that are farmed extensively require only a small labour force. The mainsprings of Australian political and social life are, and always have been, in Melbourne and Sydney and the other capital cities, and although wool still dominates the balance of payments, services and manufacturing dominate the national income. The character of Australia, and the Australians, must be sought in the city, not in the outback.

Mr. Pringle recognises that Australia is "certainly one of the most democratic and egalitarian countries the world has seen," but argues that culturally the result has been disastrous. Nevertheless it is difficult to reconcile his two pictures of Australia: as a cultural wilderness, with "a terrifying crudity in the manners and pursuits of the masses" and the lack of an "aristocracy or upper class to set a proper standard of conduct and taste and behaviour"—and as a productive source of good literature, art, and science, because of "the astonishing creative energy that everywhere persists." Mr. Pringle escapes this dilemma by finding it "disconcerting" that "against a background of mass indifference and hostility, everywhere men and women of great ability and strong creative gifts are emerging." This may be true, but is it different anywhere else? Are the manners and pursuits of the masses in Britain more elevated than those of Australia? Is it not rather that Mr. Pringle knows the Australian masses better than those of Britain, because in Australia there is no avoiding contact with the proletariat, whereas in Britain the middle classes can and do ignore them? Moreover, it is just not true when Mr. Pringle says that there is "no educated class" and that "good conversation ... does not exist in Australia," and that there is "a lack of intellectual curiosity and discussion among the students." There is certainly less of all these in Australia than in Britain, but it is a difference that can be explained simply by a population difference of forty millions. Mr. Pringle himself demonstrates at length the quality and quantity of Australian modern art and literature, and the almost excessive praise in this country of Sidney Nolan and Patrick White is further testimony.

In spite of these faults, however, Mr. Pringle's book is the best impressionistic study of Australia by a Britisher since Francis Adams' *The Australians* of 1893, and it certainly gives a total picture of Australia that is vivid and enlightening—a picture of a vigorous, democratic, crude, creative people awakening to their own powers and potentialities. This picture will be particularly meaningful to British readers, but, like the paintings of early immigrant artists in Australia who made the gum tree invariably look like the oak, it seems distorted to an Australian.

And I am an Australian.

Max Hartwell

Carmen to Cottard

Bizet and His World. By Mina Curtiss. *Secker & Warburg.* 50s.

If a mass-observation addict were to stop the first dozen people in the street and ask them to name an opera, one would not be surprised to hear later that at least half had said *Carmen*; and, if he asked the next dozen to hum an operatic motive, one might equally expect the same proportion to offer a rendering of the Toreador Song. How strange, therefore, it seems to-day that Bizet's opera, on its first appearance in 1875, was far from successful largely because the music was considered tuneless by the critics. Not only that; the theme was found by many to be immoral and corrupting. The French can hold their own—in their particular manner—when it comes to humbug; even when quick to notice that failing in other people. The director of the Opéra Comique said that its *loges* were places in which marriages were arranged; the *mise-en-scène* of *Carmen* was little better than a brothel; a young woman could not be stabbed on the stage; besides, gypsies and smugglers, even if "comic," were objectionable.

Mrs. Mina Curtiss, already known for her editing of Proust's letters (through which she discovered much of the material reproduced here) gives an absorbing picture of the composer's life and background. She has treated the musical side with a discreet avoidance of technicality, never hesitating to pause by the way when some picturesque character or incident turns up in the story. The result is an unusually enjoyable book, in which letters are allowed to speak for themselves. Bizet himself emerges as a charming personality; that astonishing 19th-century Parisian world is brilliantly lighted up in another of its myriad aspects.

Bizet's life, although in one sense not specially dramatic, possesses, in another, a pattern at

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

once vivid and moving. All began with the brightest prospects. The early years in Italy were idyllic. There were all kind of things to make him happy. The future held every promise.

When he set out for Rome Rossini and Gounod had presented him with letters of introduction. So, too, had the now forgotten musician, Carafa, who had sealed his envelope. Perhaps Bizet suspected something uncomplimentary in Carafa's recommendation, because he opened it, to find the words: "The young man who will bring you this letter has had great success with his studies.... But, in my humble opinion, he will never be a dramatic composer, as he hasn't a f—— bit of enthusiasm." When Bizet returned to Paris he ran into Carafa, who asked if he had used his introduction. "When one has the good luck to own the autograph of a man like you, M. Carafa," replied Bizet, "one keeps it."

The anecdote strikes the tone of the early days, when nothing mattered but wit and integrity. Unfortunately, the years that followed were not crowned with the immediate success that was reasonably to be expected. Bizet was much involved in hack work, which he tackled with remarkable industry and lack of self-pity. Teaching and other minor activities must have been infinitely irksome for one of his temperament and gifts. Good-natured, he was also exceedingly hot-tempered, although at the same time master of a detached, humorous way of looking at the world.

It is this side of his character, his self-possession, which makes the narrative of his love affairs so interesting. So far as can be judged from what remains on paper—and Bizet committed many of his adventures to a journal—he was in his youth almost entirely free from a romantic approach to love. He liked women, but was perfectly satisfied to meet them on a financial basis. Indeed, on one occasion, when he and some friends visited an establishment with this object in view, he appears on grounds of economy to have selected the domestic servant, finding her "a little on the skinny side." So far as can be seen, the first time he was caught by anything more than a passing fancy, was in the case of that curious figure, La Mogador, at one period of her life herself a *fille inscrite* in a licensed house, who later married a count, became a personality in theatrical circles, and wrote her memoirs.

However, there seems little doubt that when Bizet married Geneviève Halévy, he married for love. The beautiful daughter of Fromental Halévy, a composer famous in his day for his opera, *La Juive*, she was only seventeen at the time. There was opposition from both sides, Bizet's relations disliking an alliance with a family of Jewish origin; the Halévy clan justifiably feeling that Bizet's position was far from secure for a married man.

The marriage took place in 1869, on the eve of the Franco-Prussian war, so that Bizet was soon not only saddled with the normal worries that might have attended the situation of an impecunious musician married to a young and excessively neurotic wife (to say nothing of an even more neurotic mother-in-law), but also, a short time later, found himself serving in the National Guard in the siege of Paris. This was followed by the horrors of the Commune.

Particular interest attaches to Geneviève Halévy, because after Bizet's death, she married Emile Straus, a rich lawyer, and became one of the foremost hostesses of her day. In this capacity she knew Proust, who admittedly used her as one of his models—if birth is set aside, perhaps the chief model—for his Duchess de Guermantes. "Why," Proust is reported to have said, "is it that we prefer the conversation of Mme Straus, who is basically so little interested in what we care about, to that of Mme X, who is so well versed in matters of literature and art? ..."

She was, no doubt, far from an ideal wife for Bizet, and their marriage could not be called happy; but, however badly it turned out, there is something attractive about its story and his letters to her. Bizet himself seems in general to have behaved well, matrimonially speaking, not only to his wife, but also to her mother, for whom Geneviève possessed a detestation that was clearly pathological. She bore a son to Bizet called Jacques, who subsequently committed suicide.

A somewhat macabre footnote to the Bizet story is provided by Maurice Sachs' *Le Sabbat* (published in this country some years ago by Arthur Barker as *Day of Wrath*) on the subject of this son. Sachs was a gifted scallywag, certainly not wholly to be believed, but, since he speaks with great affection of Jacques Bizet, who had married his grandmother, there is perhaps something in his story.

> The flat in the Boulevard Malsherbes [writes Sachs] had been decorated in the year 1905 in the metropolitan style—that is to say, with wood-panelled walls on which there were copper flowers with pale blue enamelled centres. Jacques Bizet silently paced from room to room; sometimes he pulled a revolver out of his pocket and fired at a bibelot, then he would give himself a morphine injection; if this didn't revive him sufficiently he drank half a bottle of codeine in great gulps. He was never fully awake; when I saw him in the evening he seemed much the same as he had been in the morning....

According to Sachs, Jacques Bizet's first wife had died undergoing an operation performed by

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the model for Proust's Dr. Cottard, and his third wife drove him to his death by her refined mental torture. This is, of course, something over and above Mrs. Curtiss's book, but it seems part of the story. *Carmen*—the Duchess de Guermantes—the flat in the Boulevard Malsherbe.

If one has a criticism, it is that Mrs. Curtiss sometimes allows herself occasional phrases ("I liked the way I looked," "Did we rate?", "For two cents . . . I would go and take back my little effort") which suggest contemporary America, rather than French Second Empire. They strike a too modern note. However, this is a small matter, and method of translation is, in any case, a controversial question.

Anthony Powell

A German Tragedy

The German Resistance, Carl Goerdeler's Struggle Against Tyranny. By GERHARD RITTER. Translated by R. T. CLARK. *Allen & Unwin.* 35s.

CARL GOERDELER was above all else a man of the 19th century. He believed in reason, which he thought must surely triumph ultimately over unreason. His God—at least until the last tragic days in the Gestapo prison—was a benevolent, loving Divinity, as remote from the God an Augustine, a Calvin, or even a Pasternak, worships as were the tree-lined streets of 1900 from the alleyways of Dachau or of some mediæval ghetto. His political philosophy derived from Locke and Kant, his economic theories from Adam Smith; he believed that politics should be primarily concerned with "things," such as property or frontiers, and not with the souls of men. He placed "honour and integrity" above any theory or expediency. Descended from five generations of civil servants and jurists, he knew that the means condition the ends and cannot be excused by them. He was straightforward almost to the point of rigidity, outspoken nearly to garrulity. His moral certainties were—again until the very end—unshakeable. He believed them to be both relatively and absolutely true: therefore they had only to be uttered with sufficient force and clarity to convince, to enlighten the misled, to set the waverers on the right path, to make even a Hitler see the light of day and act according to the precepts of 19th-century, middle-class, Prussian, Christian morality.

And the final despair of this good man is terrible reading. In January of 1945, in prison, he wrote: "Unable to sleep I have asked myself

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whether there is a God who is interested in the fate of the individual. I find it hard to believe so, for this God has permitted a few hundred thousand men bestialised, insane or blinded, to drown mankind in rivers of blood and agony and crush it under mountains of horror and despair. He let millions of decent people suffer and die without raising a finger. Is this justice?" And again: "Like the Psalmist, I argue with God because I do not understand him. 'Whom he loves he takes early to Himself.' No, that is not comfort; it is intolerable...." To such a state had the Nazis reduced a man whose buoyant optimism and faith in the inherent decency of man had been firmly based on his complete belief in Christ's command to love one's neighbour.

This was the man who found himself for years the active leader of the conspiracy to overthrow Hitler. In many ways a more unsuitable conspirator would be hard to imagine, and the failure of the whole movement has been blamed on his rigidity, on his refusal to countenance assassination as a weapon, on his endless and fruitless attempts somehow to realise that most paradoxical of concepts, a "legal" revolution.

What first aroused his hatred of Nazi Germany was the government's financial dishonesty. (He was, needless to say, in view of the current of opinion of the time, a deflationist. His primary objections to Hitler in 1937 derived from his economic principles. This is surely also a paradox, in that Hitler's effective handling of the unemployment problem by public works and rearmament is now generally regarded as his sole relatively creditable action.) His hatred became more reasonable when it was directed, as it was soon to be, against the illegality of the Nazi régime and its stupid, brutal anti-Semitism. By 1938 he was aware of the truly bestial nature of the system he was henceforth determined to overthrow. He was, in fact, a conservative anti-revolutionary. He spoke and acted and died for what he regarded as the real Germany, *das wahre Deutschland*.

A great many men of his own background and generation shared his views, both in Germany and abroad. The German generals, senior civil servants, and others whom he approached, repeatedly and openly (from 1937 to 1944), almost all agreed with his opinions. Yet what, exactly, they asked, did he want them to do? Of the generals he demanded that they "refuse to obey" Hitler or even that they "arrest" him. But to them this was mutiny, a crime as abhorrent, particularly in wartime, as was murder to Carl Goerdeler. They listened, they agreed, they did not betray him, but neither did they act. He launched appeal after appeal to the West, particularly to Britain. Again he was listened to with something like respect. The late Lord Vansittart told me that Goerdeler's sincerity and honest patriotism were apparent to all. But, again, what could the Western politicians do, before someone removed the tyrant in Germany? Goerdeler believed that an "appeal to reason" across the front-lines, even a discontinuation of the bombing war and the promise of "a better future" for Germany, would open the eyes of his compatriots. He did not realise that in London and Washington, too, emotions of hatred and fear were increasingly in the ascendant and that reason was more and more at a discount as the war dragged on. The Western statesmen did nothing, or at least nothing on the lines suggested by Goerdeler. Churchill preferred to try and bomb the German people into insurrection: Roosevelt, far from promising the Germans a decent future once they had got rid of Hitler, played with the idea of a monstrous act of revenge, known as the "pastorisation" of Germany. All our leaders took refuge in the slogan "unconditional surrender."

Meanwhile, in Germany, while Goerdeler travelled and wrote endless memoranda (many of them fine statements of principle and plans for the future), other men were prepared to act. These were, in almost all cases, men of a genera-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion younger than Goerdeler's, and were usually soldiers. Oster and Tresckow and later Stauffenberg were attempting from 1938 on to kill Hitler. Goerdeler disapproved, though his disapproval lessened as the monstrous nature of the Nazi régime become more apparent with the genocide of the Jews and the other well-known atrocities. By 1944 he was prepared to head a government brought into being by the assassination of the dictator. But he never gave his approval to that act of violence. When it failed on July 20th, 1944, he seems to have accepted that failure as Divine punishment for the use of criminal methods. It is hardly surprising that this apparently almost hypocritical attitude should have irritated men like Stauffenberg and Julius Leber, the Socialist leader, who—at least as high-principled and patriotic as himself—were prepared to stop at nothing in their efforts to save their country from its terrible shame. Had the 20th of July succeeded, Goerdeler could hardly have played for long the part that later devolved on Dr. Adenauer. But then, could Adenauer—were Stauffenberg and Leber and Leuschner and Tresckow and Trott and the rest of that gallant and determined band still alive to-day?

It is this weird and very important paradox—the attempt of Goerdeler and his friends to carry out "a legal revolution against a criminal government"—that is the central theme of Professor Ritter's profound and honest book. If, historically, it now seems little more than an incident—even by comparison with what Stauffenberg did—in the widest psychological-political sense it is surely extremely important that we in our century try to understand and perhaps even to decide at what point, if ever, illegal action is justified against what we regard as illegal tyranny.

Professor Ritter makes no attempt to conceal the shortcomings of his friend and hero, and his manifest virtues shine all the brighter. And he does show this particular anti-Nazi movement in Germany for what it was—primarily "a moral force," which drew its sustenance from a more liberal past and which did not entirely fail, since it has bequeathed a decent heritage to the Western Germany of to-day.

The nature of that movement has been scarcely understood here. This is partly due to semantics. The word "resistance" has a very definite meaning to us, but whereas Halder and Witzleben were as much patriots as General de Gaulle, their problems were different from his of 1940, for they must attempt to overthrow their own government in wartime and thus bring about a major defeat. Therefore their *résistance* was inevitably of a very different order. Similarly "opposition" has for us a very definite meaning—implying as it does an alternative government ready to take over—which is certainly inapplicable to the whole of a very disparate group of officers and civilians whose only general point of agreement was a hatred of the criminal régime that most of them served.

But there is another reason for misunderstanding what happened in the German underground movement. It was quite deliberately misrepresented in this country, for narrow political reasons, during the war. A residue of this misinterpretation found its way into Sir John Wheeler-Bennett's semi-official *Nemesis of Power* (Professor Ritter points out a great number of mistakes both of fact and interpretation in this well-known and widely-quoted work). And finally, certain professional anti-German journalist-historians have never ceased to sneer at the action of brave and honourable men whose motives were apparently incomprehensible to them.

It is thus all the more admirable that Messrs. Allen & Unwin should have published a book which can, by reasons of its scholarly density, hardly be expected to have a very wide appeal. It is only a pity that they should have done so in a translation that is truly deplorable; the translator's inability to write his own language is only matched by his skill in misunderstanding

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quite simple words in German. Thus (p. 274) he translates *ermutigen* which means "encourage" as "discourage." On the next page he translates Tresckow's revealing remark: "The attempt must be made, *coûte que coûte*," as "The attempt must *succeed* . . ." a mistake which completely perverts Tresckow's meaning. As for his English, he gets off to a characteristic start in his translator's note, by referring to the "sensitiveness" of his author's appreciation. He believes the superlative of further to be "furtherest," and so on. It is sad, too, that the proofs do not seem to have been checked. On p. 74 we read: ". . . 1936, almost a year after the reoccupation of the Rhineland." On p. 289 Goerdeler's cousin's name is spelled Ulrich and Ulbrich in one and the same line. Indeed, dates and German names are grossly mangled throughout. However, in cutting this long book for the English reader, Mr. R. T. Clark has done a competent, workmanlike job. For anyone who cannot read the original, even this translation will be of great value in helping to clarify and explain our age and its strange, terrible problems.

Constantine FitzGibbon

African Voices

Darkness and Light. Edited by PEGGY RUTHERFOORD. *Faith Press.* 18s.

ANTHOLOGIES are bad enough, and one of the prose and poems of a continent, is a monster. As the continent is Africa, there are added obstacles. Some of the writers are performing in a foreign language (English). Others are translated, with almost total loss to the poetry, and some pieces are translated by persons of whom English is not the mother tongue. Sometimes the same fragment is "translated" by one person, and "adapted" by another; and, most gruesome of all, certain tales and poems are "told to" or, worse still, "retold by," the actual contributor. Chunks are reprinted of already published works by famous African writers, and others, like Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah, are included out of courtesy, presumably. The introduction by Peggy Rutherfoord, who for four years assembled the collection, is neither factual enough nor critical enough to help. "The journey to Parnassus has been a long one," she records. It has indeed—and weary!

And yet, out of this meagre conglomeration, this dim glimpse, this muffled echo, there emerges, unmistakably, a heady whiff, a startling cry, direct from Africa. And those who love, hate, or love-hate the continent (for no one, who goes there, can remain indifferent to it) will instantly recognise the mixture: the witty chatter, the sagacious silences, the enormous laughs, the sombre gloom, the lavish gifts, the sudden cruelty and, most of all, the bubbling, timeless, irresistible vitality. The four forced marriages of Africa, whose fruits are represented here—in the east with the Arabs, in the west with Europeans, in the south with lunatics, and in the centre with its ancient self—are each so diverse, yet all prodigiously alive. And through the maze and tangle of the translations, there constantly sounds that grave and delightful note of *sophisticated innocence*, of the kind that Europe remembers in the old Greek writers, and in the finest of its own folk tales.

The stories written (even those "retold") directly in English satisfy the most. And in Africa, one can see happening what already has in so many other continents and countries—the shaping of yet another English tongue. This splendid speech, which is our country's great invention (and perhaps the only thing by which, eventually, it will be remembered), has, among other virtues, the strange and endearing faculty of re-creating itself when words are artfully, unexpectedly juxtaposed, so that they bounce off one another to make new meanings and new poetry, as the Elizabethans made them do, and now the Africans. Instead of wincing condescendingly at these inventions, we would do well to plunder them (as we have many other things from Africa), so as to revive our own constipated literary and "official" languages which have by now so greatly lost the lyrical vigour of their youth.

Gradually it is dawning on us—this book is one of many portents—that we have taught too much in Africa, and learned practically nothing, even about ourselves. I visited many Teacher Training Colleges when I was there, but never saw one for Europeans, and longed for it. From her seat on the verandah of her suburban bungalow—Wood Green transplanted dreadfully to the equatorial jungle—I hear the ex-colonel's lady asking querulously, "*What* is there to learn?" The answer, as the best of these stories will reveal, is simply, how to live, human creatures one beside the other. If ultimately civilisation is how men and women behave, the voluntary student will discover that in Africa immense thought has been given, throughout ages, to answering this question, which is central to all the others.

Colin MacInnes

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stalin's Slogan

Socialism in One Country, 1924-26. By E. H. Carr. *Macmillan.* 45s.

In his slow but stately progress through the history of the Russian Revolution, Professor Carr has now reached the crucial period of the mid-twenties, when the personal struggle for power among Lenin's successors broadened into a fateful conflict over long-term policies. It was in these years that the Bolshevik leaders slowly and hesitantly came to grips with the problem of industrialisation: how slowly and how hesitantly, Mr. Carr's account makes plain. It was then, too, that Stalin gradually tightened his grip over the party apparatus—the same apparatus which eventually became the organisational focus of his "revolution from above." When these two processes came to a head simultaneously, at the Fourteenth Party Congress in December 1925, the Soviet leaders—somewhat to their own surprise—found themselves committed to the policy they had rejected when Trotsky proposed it some years earlier. Two more years had to pass before the Fifteenth Congress, in December 1927, took the final step of sanctioning the draft Five-Year-Plan, but by the end of 1925 the crucial choice had been made.

In this complex of crises and decisions, a pivotal place came to be occupied by the slogan "*Socialism in One Country,*" with which Stalin's name was henceforth associated. That it was at first no more than a slogan becomes clear from Mr. Carr's laboriously documented account of the confused inter-party debates and polemics of the period. Stalin, it is plain, hardly knew what he was letting himself in for when —with some encouragement from Bukharin— he asserted that the Soviet régime could solve its internal problems even if there was no world revolution. The further step from national self-sufficiency to breakneck industrialisation belongs to a later period, after Trotsky had been driven out and his programme adopted by men who refused to look at it when he advocated its merits. In 1925 few people dreamed of such things. If Stalin did, he kept quiet about it. The "industrialisers" were to be found on the left wing of the party, although it is noteworthy that in the person of Sokolnikov—then Finance Commissar—Trotsky's following also included an extreme *laisser-fairist* to whom the solidity of the currency meant a great deal more than industrialisation: further proof that the political battle-lines had been drawn in disregard of economic logic.

As yet Professor Carr has given us only the first of three projected volumes on the great controversy of the mid-twenties; most of it is taken up by an extremely detailed and thorough analysis of the economic background. The factional struggle is to be discussed at greater length in a second volume, external relations in a third. Fortunately Mr. Carr has departed from this rather rigid framework to the extent of introducing short sketches of the principal *dramatis personæ*: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, and Stalin. There is also a tantalisingly brief account of the inter-party debates on the eve of the December 1925 congress, when Zinoviev and Kamenev publicly broke with their erstwhile ally, Stalin. It is typical of the confusion attending the major turning-points in this extraordinary story that the break came over Stalin's support for the then official policy of making greater concessions to the wealthier peasants—shortly to be denounced as *kulaks*. In 1925 it was still possible for Communist leaders to assert that "socialism" could and would be "built at a snail's pace," though Bukharin even then got into trouble by declaring that the peasants should be encouraged to "enrich themselves." This was heresy, and has remained so, though Gomulka has come close to saying something similar.

Amidst these complexities—every fluctuation

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the harvest yield meant a political crisis in the Central Committee—the great fact that stands out from Professor Carr's account is the constant strengthening of the Communist party's hold over the country, and the machine's hold over the party. These were the years when the Bolshevik leadership consciously substituted itself for the proletariat in whose name it had made the revolution—so much so that when in 1927 Trotsky appealed to non-party elements he was in all seriousness denounced as a counter-revolutionary. The party bureaucracy had not yet given birth to a new ruling class—it *was* the new ruling class, or rather it filled the void left by the collapse of the old order and the absence of anything organic that could take its place. For a brief period in Russian history, the shape of society came to depend upon the decisions taken by a handful of leaders. Even an academic theorist like Bukharin could change the course of events by shifting from one theoretical position to another. Such situations never last long, but the intoxication born of them leaves its mark upon the decision-makers. Autocracy was in the Russian tradition; when Communism became the vehicle of a planned "revolution from above," the autocratic spirit reasserted itself with a vengeance. This was one of the many ways in which the "principle of continuity," in Mr. Carr's language, triumphed over the "principle of change."

Why this momentous change came to be associated with the figure of Stalin, requires some further explanation. Mr. Carr's analysis establishes clearly enough the reasons for Trotsky's failure; he is less convincing in trying to account for Stalin's success. He seems indeed somewhat baffled by the personality of the protagonist, though a clue to his success is suggested by the observation that, as the most nationalist and "isolationist" of the Soviet leaders, he was instinctively driven into courses which fitted both Russia's anti-Western tradition and the technical requirements of ultra-industrialism. Here it may be thought that Mr. Carr solves his problem by looking at the situation through the eyes of the victors. The theoretical justification for this procedure was suggested years ago by the late Professor R. G. Collingwood who, as a good Hegelian, held that we can understand a problem only by arguing back from the solution that was eventually adopted: Nelson won the battle of Trafalgar, hence he had solved his tactical dilemmas, and we can discover what these were, and what his general strategy was, by arguing back from the tactics he employed in the battle. Villeneuve, having lost the battle which Nelson won, must be presumed to have failed to solve *his* problems, and we thus cannot discover what his plans were by studying his manœuvres. The argument is ingenious, but it ignores the possibility that victories may be won despite faulty planning, or even in the absence of any plans.

Again, it may be true that we can understand the nature of a problem only by arguing back from the solution, but how do we know that there was no alternative? In the case of post-revolutionary Russia, there was at any rate the alternative of building industry upon a prosperous peasantry, instead of squeezing the maximum surplus out of the countryside for the benefit of the planners. That, of course, would have involved a slower tempo, and it is arguable that the U.S.S.R. would then not have become the world's second industrial power; but it cannot seriously be maintained that "Socialism in One Country" by definition meant starving the population for decades, in the interest of erecting a giant heavy industry. The fact is that in 1925 Stalin himself did not think so—on the contrary, he was all for going slow. So were most of the Bolshevik leaders. That in the end they outdid Peter the Great—not to mention Ivan the Terrible—in the sacrifices they imposed upon the Russian people, is a historical circumstance with which we have to reckon.

The Novels of George Eliot

BARBARA HARDY

A new study of George Eliot's novels which devotes particular attention to her power of form, interpreting this not only as the product of conscious artifice but also as the direct expression of her profound analysis of the human condition. *25s net*

Balzac's Comédie Humaine

HERBERT J. HUNT

Professor Hunt relates the development of the various categories into which Balzac divided the stories of the *Comédie*, and the genesis and development of the characters who reappear in them, to the stages of the author's progress as a creative artist. He provides, in effect, a fully informative guide to Balzac's grand conception. *April 23* *50s net*

THE ATHLONE PRESS

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Perhaps it requires no rational explanation; certainly it has never found one.

George Lichtheim

The Monotony of Love

The Chains of Love. By Zoé Oldenbourg. *Gollancz.* 18s.

The Captive and the Free. By Joyce Cary. *Michael Joseph.* 18s.

The Ruined Boys. By Roy Fuller. *Deutsch.* 15s.

Love in 4 Flats. By Ralph Ricketts. *Chapman and Hall.* 15s.

Let Us Find Heroes. By Gregory Solon. *Constable.* 16s.

Zoé Oldenbourg's splendid and sprawling new novel, excellently and feelingly translated by Michael Bullock, *The Chains of Love*, is about a group of artists in Paris: and for a harder set of people to bring alive you would have to comb the five continents. It ought to be as easy to write a love story about one place, or one set of people, as another. But Paris, and Parisian left-wing intellectuals (subsection painters and sculptors particularly), have been overworked till the very names of streets and districts, the very smell of paint and clay, seem more fictional, more "romantic" in the wrong sense, than actual. Then, too, though it may sound paradoxical, it is harder, I think, to write a passionately intended and passionate sounding love story about people to whom sex (if not love) is something almost as commonplace as paint or clay, and as uninhibitedly regarded, than it is to write about one in which there is an element of conflict, not so much between the lovers as between one way of life and another, one relationship and another, where the physical consummation of a love affair is less casual, less a foregone conclusion. This is not to advocate eight and a half volumes of snails' pace seduction, such as you find in *Clarissa*, with consummation in the ninth, but simply to state the (pretty obvious) fact that the "glass of water" attitude to sex does not noticeably diminish the excitement. (In fact, Madame Oldenbourg's main character Stéphanie is anything but promiscuous: but the atmosphere of pervasive promiscuity—a basically unexciting one—exists, of course.) Here the love affairs, though mainly triangular or even quadrangular, are made so terrifyingly passionate that one almost really believes in a man's suicide for love; and, so closely is one involved with them that one follows with a personal sense of fullness or loss the fluctuations of Elie's feeling for Stéphanie, Stéphanie's for Aron, Aron's for Stéphanie, Stéphanie's for Francis, and so on, since they are never mechanical or arbitrary. The characters live at an intense, but credible, level of feeling; and this intensity extends far beyond the scope of a particular love affair, to their attitude to their work, to their surroundings, to their families: particularly one feels it in the relationship between Stéphanie and her illegitimate child Lisbeth—their complete interdependence, the fun and physical playfulness, the mother's half-exhausted, adoring sense of responsibility, the sort of sense that makes it impossible for the mother of a small child ever to sleep really soundly, for the consciousness of the child's needs is there, even in sleep. It is in making us feel the humanity of her characters, her meaning of the word love and the way it conditions their behaviour, that Madame Oldenbourg excels: "Oh, the everlasting backslidings and fresh beginnings," she writes, "the monotony of love!"

Joyce Cary's last novel, posthumously "put together" (for he wrote his novels in a curious horizontal way across the years, spending as

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long as ten years on one, with several others going at the same time), *The Captive and the Free*, is, like other books of his, a kind of circuitous commentary on something; an effort to interpret some large philosophical question in terms of action and human beings. The result, if humanly artificial and philosophically inconclusive, makes fascinating reading in a dry unprepossessing way. I find Mr. Cary's mind (and consequently his style) arid and unrewarding to consider; and this effort of his to say something about religion seems to me as wide of the mark as *The Horse's Mouth*, say, was wide of any artistic mark that mattered. It has, though (and this was Mr. Cary's main talent), assembled a good grotesque lot of characters with a Breughelesque vigour and animality about them, though limited by the rather obtrusive "contemporariness" of their surroundings, which makes one feel Mr. Cary was determined to work in too much social comment without a really working knowledge of the social scene. This was a serious writer without, I feel, the spiritual equipment to carry his weight of seriousness: a man without intuition, without those moments of joy and passion that make writing, at times, the transparent vessel of feeling and of thought. He wrote with tough courage, without them: the result is glum and at the same time intellectually invigorating.

The Ruined Boys is what you might call an oblique book: it never stares straight at its subject, or says exactly what it means to say; gradually and cumulatively it builds up its picture, its effects, its morality, and, looking back on it, you see distanced the pattern of what happened, the meaning of all that was left unstated or misunderstood. It is a school story, an evocation of mild moral squalor rather than a story in the sense of plot or incident. A boy, his home life shattered by his mother's bolting, and reduced to a furnished bed-sitter with his father, goes to school over-anxious to please, to make a niche for himself. He grows, his values confused by the extraordinary adult confusion of values around him: the good and valuable being embodied only in some rather remote relationships and almost unsympathetic glimpses of adult life and behaviour. Over it all hangs the dreadfulness of life in a cramped, bad boarding-school—the huddle, the snobberies, the rudeness, set down in a rather formal way, tidily, exactly, with little comment and no obvious moral drawn: one at least of life's horrors we need never revisit.

Love in 4 Flats is a neat book—too neat—in a highly conventional framework. The time is 1935 and the four flats are occupied by four sets of people with overlapping relationships. While he keeps inside the flats Mr. Ricketts's nice social sense and general agreeableness keep him going well enough; but immediately he goes outside them (as on a trip to Nazi Germany) you realise the limitations of his method and above all of his outlook, of mere agreeableness, even of his view of love. The characters are pleasantly differentiated, their appearances and particularly their clothes very carefully described, the effect being (even where vivid) rather glossy. You can see it in the names, even: the two young heroines are called Auriol and Cynara, their respective *cavalieri serventi* Valerian Crowe and Julian Tarrant. Altogether, a novel to skim without effort or distaste: mild and polite and almost entirely flavourless. The jacket is unusually attractive; the Book Society recommends.

Let Us Find Heroes is the opposite, a heavyweight book, the story of an escape from East to West Europe through a divided capital city: intense and credible, but (as is the danger with books of the kind) too consciously "powerful," hammering hard but somehow rather inadequately. It is restrained with its horrors, which makes them the more horrifying. Its theme and even its method have grandeur, but not the final —rather nebulous—impression.

Isabel Quigly

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM THE OTHER SHORE

Sad Sack, Uncensored

IT SEEMS centuries since Russia was described as a "mystery wrapped in enigma" and even longer since travellers were publishing reports on "a new civilisation" and "a future that works."

Books and despatches have become soberer, more modestly informative, although reporters on the spot have still over the years been handicapped by the operation of Russian censorship.

Mr. Macmillan's visit to Russia provided the first opportunity to send uncensored dispatches "from the other shore" by Western journalists. For the huge press corps accompanying the Prime Minister to Moscow censorship procedures were suspended by the Soviet authorities. How was this historic opportunity used by those who went on the tour? *The Observer* (March 8) noted:

> The visit was an unusual journalistic expedition—a caravan of over a hundred, all under the same roof, at the same reception, in the same train, or sitting round the same press conference. It was scarcely surprising that, however much they wished to study Russia, they spent most of the time studying each other.

An index to the huge sheaf of clippings from Russia during this period would run the gamut from A to Б. There was the inevitable reference to the tutti-frutti varieties (variously listed as 57, 62, 67) of ice-cream sold in the sub-zero temperature of the Moscow winter, and the inescapable statistics of the Russian girls (52–45–50 was held to be not representative). The political analysis was less concerned with Marxism than with millinery (that Macmillan hat), and few correspondents bit off anything tougher than the real proportions of Mr. K.'s toothache. The *News Chronicle* sceptic reported a baritone singing a ballad called *If I Loved You*. *The Times* was apparently more enthusiastic, less conditional, and had Mr. Litsitserin intoning *I Love You*. The *Daily Express* hit rhapsodic notes: "Some say that it [the hat] has been such a success that Britain must have it enshrined as a national monument." The toothache caused general dismay, but the *Daily Worker* (February 27) put up with it very bravely: "No slight or discourtesy on Mr. Khrushchev's part can be read into the decision not to accompany Mr. Macmillan to Kiev." (The dental session with the Iraqi delegation which Mr. Khrushchev had instead was not reported in the *Worker*.)

As to the political significance of the visit, the correspondent of the *Daily Express* (February 23) found an authoritative source in Moscow, Burgess, who disclosed "I have no inside information, but I know the Russians are always very pleased at the prospects of talks with the West." Malcolm Muggeridge was less pleased, and his *Daily Mirror* despatches must have given the temporarily unemployed censors itchy palms: "I myself find it difficult to see how a non-aggression pact, as such, could have any more validity than the piece of paper Chamberlain waved in the air when he came back from seeing Hitler."

Randolph Churchill refused to stay in the Hotel Ukraina ("which may be good enough for Ukrainians, poor things, but not for an English journalist") but was able to report in the *Evening Standard*: "Well, there we are in the National Hotel—and Burgess, wearing his old Etonian tie, says to me. . . ."

And when it was all over, there were still the enthusiasts and the sceptics.

The *Daily Sketch* issued its verdict with the headline: WELL DONE, MAC! BRITAIN IS PROUD OF YOU! Malcolm Muggeridge, whose recondite daily references to Tolstoy and Dostoevsky had to be explained in footnotes by the *Mirror* sub-editors, switched allusions:

> Mr. Macmillan has to deal with Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Mikoyan, two characteristic products of a revolutionary régime . . . two tough, calculating, astute men who are by no means old-Etonians. They buffet him around, as in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, Ariel did Trinculo and his ribald companion.
>
> One minute they slap him on his back and drink his health, the next they pull his chair from under him when he sits down. They alternatively bully and cajole him until the poor man scarcely knows where he is. It is a tragi-comedy such as even our bizarre time has rarely produced. . . .

Then Mr. Macmillan went on television, "for 20 minutes," according to the *Daily Express*, for "a confident, 27-minute appearance," according to the *Manchester Guardian*, before an audience (reported the *Guardian*) "unofficially estimated at between four and five millions," "ten million Russians" (reported the Mail), and Muggeridge, properly suspicious of the whole infernal medium, wrote of the broadcast: "What impression has it made on the Soviet people? I should say, in our sense of the word, very little. . . . How many saw and heard him on TV last night it is impossible to say. The telecast was confined to Moscow. It was not announced in the press beforehand nor reported in it afterwards. A viewer would have had to pick it up by chance. Nor was it put out on sound radio which would have carried it all over the Soviet Union. . . ."

It was all apparently a very shaking experience, but what shook?

"Ten Days that Didn't Shake the World" was the summing-up in the *New Statesman*. But, according to *The Observer* they were *"Ten Days that Shook the Press,"* and their correspondent went on to reveal what perhaps we should have known earlier:

> Several of the more august correspondents were telephoned by Russian girls in the hotel, who appeared to be quite genuine prostitutes, attempt-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing to make dubious assignments for the evening; so when the telephone bell rang, one was never sure whether it would be London or a prostitute. . . .

All in all, there were, however, some new facts, some new insights. Don Iddon even took the trouble to report in the *Daily Mail* that "in fashion, the Sack has come to Leningrad. . . ."

•

Is Sex Necessary ?

"SOCIALIST emulation," a favourite campaign method to achieve specific goals in Communist countries, is now being applied in China to the sex life of the population. This is to be a reinforcement of the general propaganda for individual birth control. The Shanghai *Wen Hui Pao* (January 23rd, 1958) reports:

> The cadres of the Health Bureau of Shanghai Municipality, setting an example themselves, have started to practise planned childbirth. All the comrades of the Bureau have decided to map out within this week their childbirth plan for the second Five-Year Plan period. The comrades working in the women's and children's clinic have already completed their planning ahead of time and put up a challenge to the other sections of the Bureau. . . . The medical and preventive department of the Bureau immediately accepted the challenge and no less than 64 per cent of the members who already had children have guaranteed that they will have no more babies during the second Five-Year Plan period. Other sections guarantee that they will cut the birth-rate 20.0 per thousand of the first Five-Year Plan period to 4.0 per thousand during the second Five-Year Plan period. . . .

•

Long Live Personality !

ONLY three years ago, in 1956, Khrushchev said in his "secret" speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU:

> It is impermissible and foreign to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism to elevate one person, to transform him into a superman possessing supernatural characteristics akin to those of a god. Such a man supposedly knows everything, sees everything, thinks for everyone, can do anything, is infallible in his behaviour.

In 1959, during the 21st Congress, the modest beginnings of a new idolatry were clearly visible, although tributes paid to the old destroyer of "the cult of [another] personality" were not expressed in the superlatives customary under the old idol. But if no explicit reference was made to Khrushchev's infallibility, effusive praise was lavished on his universality.

AGRICULTURE: "*I should like to suggest that much of what has been achieved along the path shown by the great Lenin is the result of the unflagging initiative and personal example of Comrade N. S. Khrushchev, his profound practical knowledge, his ability to fuse creatively the practical demands of life and theory, and his close ties with the broad working masses.*" (*E. Andreyeva, Chairman of the Comintern Collective Farm, Tambov Province,* Pravda, *February* 5, 1959.)

ALCOHOL: "*Dear Nikita Sergeyevich, we are very grateful to you for your indefatigable solicitude for the well-being of our Soviet people. Our people will also be grateful for your concern that the consumption of alcohol should be sharply reduced.*" (*T. S. Maltsev, Field Foreman in the Lenin Behest Collective Farm,* Pravda, *February* 5.)

ARMY: "*I consider it my duty to state that thanks to the daily solicitude of the Communist Party, its Central Committee and, personally, of Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, our armed forces are equipped fully in accordance with modern military requirements.*" (*Marshal R. Malinovski, Minister of Defence,* Pravda, *February* 4.)

ATOMIC PHYSICS: "*Installations for the study of thermonuclear reactions are large and complex constructions costing tens of millions rubles. Their speedy setting up has been achieved thanks to the enormous attention and great help given by the Presidium of the CC of our Party and by Comrade Khrushchev personally.*" (*Academician I. V. Kurchatov, Soviet atomic expert,* Pravda, *February* 5.)

CHEMISTRY: "*Now, as is known, we have already set about the fulfillment of the programme of the accelerated development of the chemical industry, elaborated on the initiative of N. S. Khrushchev.*" (*L. Brezhnev, Member of the Presidium and secretary of the CC, CPSU,* Pravda, *January* 31.)

COTTON-GROWING: "*What has guaranteed a further increase of cotton production in our country is mainly the indefatigable activity of the Presidium of the CC and of Comrade N. S. Khrushchev personally.*" (*T. Uldzhabaev, First Secretary of the CC of the Tadhik CP,* Pravda, *February* 4.)

EDUCATION: "*The question of the reorganisation of education, taken up on the initiative of Comrade N. S. Khrushchev, is a clear manifestation of the Leninist solicitous, sensitive and attentive care about the needs and peculiarities of each people.*" (*I. R. Razzakov, First Secretary of the CC of the Kirghiz CP,* Pravda, *February* 4.)

ELECTRIC POWER: "*A classical model of the correct approach to the problems of construction is the one advanced by Comrade N. S. Khrushchev for the construction of thermal instead of hydro-electric stations.*" (*A. F. Zasyadko, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers,* Pravda, *February* 3.)

GUIDED MISSILES: "*For the successes in the construction and launching of the artificial satellites and the cosmic rockets, we are obliged above all to the Presidium of the CC of our Party, and to Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev personally, who guided the works aiming in this direction.*" (*D. F. Ustinov Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers,* Pravda, *February* 5.)

LITERATURE: "*In the appeal for a close link of literature and art with the life of the people, so beneficial to literature, lies the enormous importance of the well-known statement of Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev.*" (*Alexander Tvardovski, Editor of* Novy Mir *and Member of the Presidium of the Writers' Union,* Pravda, *February* 2.)

NATIONALITIES: "*The workers of Turkmenistan profoundly, with all their heart, thank the Leninist Central Committee, the Soviet Government, and Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev personally, for the genuinely fatherly concern for the prosperity of the Turkmen people, for the realisation of its century-old dreams.*" (*D. D. Karaev, First Secretary of the CC of the Turkmen CP,* Pravda. *February* 9.)

PLANNING: "*It might have seemed at first that a dry, purely economic and, indeed, a very boring problem had been placed before us: the plan figures and those control figures. But Nikita Khrushchev's report has fallen on our ears more like a magnificent symphony of communist construction.*" (*A. I. Mikoyan, Member of the Presidium and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers,* Pravda, *January* 31.)

SCIENCE: "*In the name of the scientists of Siberia, many thanks to the Central Committee of the Party, to the Council of Ministers, and to Nikita Sergeyevich for their attention and daily help.*" (*M. A. Lavrentyev, Academician,* Pravda, *February* 1.)

THEORY: "*Comrade Khrushchev has shown, as early as the 20th Congress, an example of the creative development of Marxist-Leninist theory and of its skillful application to the specific features of the concrete situation.*" (*O. V. Kuusinen, Member of the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU,* Pravda, *February* 4.)

UNIVERSAL GENIUS: "*We must say quite plainly, comrades, that in the great political, theoretical, and organisational work which has been carried out in all fields by our Leninist Central Committee, beginning with the solution of the most complex and urgent international questions, the consistent struggle for the cause of peace, for the prevention of war, the solution of the most important questions of the development of agriculture, the collective farm system, the reorganisation of the management of industry and construction, and ending with questions of science, literature and arts, the questions of enhancing links between the school and life, the outstanding rôle belongs to the initiative, the rich political experience and tireless energy of Comrade Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev [STORMY APPLAUSE].*" (*P. Pospelov, Candidate member of the Presidium and secretary of the CC of the CPSU,* Pravda, *February* 1.)

By Khrushchev's 65th birthday (next month), tributes to him may well be accompanied in *Pravda* by the supreme typographical insertion, "STORMY APPLAUSE—ALL RISE," as in the good old days The cult is dead, but long live personality!

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Colonialism

THE crux of Mr. Worsthorne's argument [ENCOUNTER, December 1958] is "That the withdrawal of the Western Colonial powers from presently dependent areas would enhance the power of the Soviet bloc." But where in experience is it in fact borne out? India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Ghana, Malaya, the West Indies, Burma, Sudan—these are the ex-"colonies" which have become independent since the war. Most have successfully resisted being drawn into either of the ideological camps. There are, of course, troubles, in some of these countries, serious troubles, but they are if anything due to inexperience and the release of energy which independence has brought. India, for one, has accomplished more in her eleven years of independence than British rule achieved in the ninety before it. No one says it's enough; but it is a start.

Isn't it possible after all this time for people to get it into their heads that what is in the interests of this country is not necessarily in the interests of the rest of the world, and that the centre of political wisdom is not centred on that neo-Gothic monstrosity just off Whitehall. What is it that Mr. Worsthorne fears? Armed intervention, subversion, or economic penetration? Of the three, he would do well to fear the latter most. Russia has a fund of agricultural, veterinary, forestry, and other experience at her disposal which though perhaps a little rough and ready is still effective and inexpensive. Though Russia is still in many of these methods a backward country, she produces impressive results, and current Russian experience in Central Asia is of more relevance to other and even more backward countries.

In the end, the future of Africa and Asia will be settled by things such as this; by the provision of all weather roads and communications, by the provision of water and irrigation facilities, and by improved agricultural methods. Not by the devising of complex constitutions and franchise laws! Certainly not by the peddling of Greek philosophy, and the creation of heavily overloaded administrative superstructures full of unproductive *babus*.

Worsthorne's crucial question is: "How can the emerging Continents of Asia and Africa be fitted into a world balance of power which does not leave the West hopelessly at a disadvantage?" The answer to that is simple. As things stand at present, they can't. The mathematics of the thing is that the so-called White, Democratic, Christian West is outnumbered by the non-white, still largely undemocratic non-Christian East and by Africa, and who, may I ask, started all this nonsense about the rule of mere numbers?

"To suppose that Britain, India, Ceylon, Ghana, Nigeria, and Australia can form a viable political community is absurd." Isn't it just as absurd to suppose that a "United Europe" could include nations which fought each other for centuries? What many people have had the foresight to see is that if close connections can be built up between the various tribes of Europe, Asia, and Africa, that if in fact the "inter-relationship between dependent and developed peoples," which Mr. Worsthorne says "cannot be severed in fact," is handled on an "equality of status" basis among all the contending parties, an awful lot of friction is going to be avoided, and we are much more likely to get some semblance of peace on this planet than if we allow it to break up into racially exclusive compartments. I recently heard even Jacques Soustelle say that "you cannot build Europe without Africa. . . ."

REX MALIK

London

"Impasse in the Holy Land"

IN HIS elaborate analysis of the tension between Arab States and Israel, Mr. Erskine Childers (ENCOUNTER, July 1958) reaches the conclusion that the basic cause of that tension is to be found in the unrestricted freedom of Jewish immigration to Israel which, in the view of the Arabs would lead to—was in fact designed to pave the way for—Israel's military expansion. This is the basic issue, as Mr. Childers reasserts in endless variations, "at the risk," as he himself writes, "of monotonous repetition"—though not unaware of the sinking-in effect of such repetition.

It is a wearisome and thankless task to argue against an alleged fear-complex, but one not possessed by that complex might at least realise the profound significance to Jews of the right to free immigration to Israel. It embodies for them not merely an assurance of physical security and survival, but the prospect of a meaningful national life such as that possessed by every other people on earth and such as they can have nowhere else. The detached observer might also ponder that the large immigration of recent years resulted to a considerable extent from the pressing need to rescue the victims of Arab intolerance and persecution in the Middle East. If Israel is left in possession of the area which it now holds (in particular, of the Negev), it can cope with the settlement problems that are likely to arise in the foreseeable future. One is faced here with a remarkable contradiction in Mr. Childers' argument: In one breath he demands a drastic limitation of Jewish immigration to Israel because the Arabs fear that it might lead to Israel's military expansion; in the next breath, however, he demands that Israel give up a major part even of that area (small, as even he admits) which it now possesses—the very zone in which future arrivals could be settled and absorbed.

Nor is this all. Mr. Childers is fully alive to the utterly unprecedented character of his proposal for the international control of the population growth of a sovereign state, but insists that in this case the unprecedented has to be done in order to allay the fear complex—however irrational it may be—of her Arab neighbours. But if that demand were conceded, might it not be applied with much greater force to other and infinitely more dangerous demographic problems in the Middle East—such as the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fantastic Egyptian population increase of 600,000 per annum, which was frankly welcomed in last year's debates in the Egyptian National Assembly as likely to enhance her military strength and political power in relation to her neighbours, west, south, and east?

Moreover, what reality is there in the danger allegedly inherent in the unrestricted immigration to Israel? Suppose even that the Israel population were in years to come to increase to a figure between 4 and 5 millions (as suggested by Mr. Childers), would that constitute a threat to the 50 million Arabs inhabiting the Middle East whose number is increasing without any restraint, while in Israel Western population controls operate? Mr. Childers is apparently unaware of what harrowing memories are being awakened by his proposal for a limitation of Jewish immigration to Israel by methods of external supervision and control. The people of Israel lived once—during the mandatory régime—under such a system of control, originally defended on economic grounds, but subsequently frankly admitted to be of political nature. Its result was that during the most ghastly period of Jewish history, while six million Jews were being exterminated, the land in which a national home had been promised to the Jewish people was not able to offer a haven of escape to more than a small fraction of their number.

Mr. Childers couples his plea for the restriction of Jewish immigration with a proposal—advanced in deadly earnest—that the U.N. General Assembly should call upon Member-States outside the Middle East to affirm to the Secretary-General their willingness to admit reasonable quotas of Jewish refugees from any future persecution, and that a standing fund be established under his control to assist in such resettlement should it become necessary at any time. Does he realise, to put it mildly, that this suggestion is as much a "pipe-dream"—to use his own words in another context—as the proposed imposition of international immigration control on Israel? Is he really unaware that even if some countries were prepared to admit Jewish refugees from future persecution, this would not meet the essential problem of Jewish insecurity, the problem of anti-semitism, which invariably appears when there is a marked increase of the Jewish population, just as similar increases of other minority groups in other places produce parallel phenomena of xenophobia (as shown by recent experience in most advanced countries).

It is bewildering that these basic truths have to be re-stated after all that the world has gone through in recent decades, after all the Jews, in particular, have suffered, as a result of their minority status everywhere, and after the unique achievement of social reconstruction and human rehabilitation wrought in Israel.

One final word about the alleged military expansionism which is supposed to flow inevitably from Israel's "unrestricted immigration." The reply to this charge is provided by Israel's record in reclaiming the desert and the waste lands of Palestine by skilled farming, scientific research, and industrial development, which Mr. Childers frankly admits. If Israel had harboured expansionist designs in order to gain additional land for settling immigrants, there were in the last ten years numerous opportunities of realising them, following the frequent *coups d'état*, revolutions, assassinations, and political disturbances in the neighbouring Arab countries. Does not the fact that Israel—the supposed would-be aggressor—has for ten years urged that the present armistice frontiers be finalised by a peace settlement, while the Arab States have obstinately rejected their finalisation, belie the allegation of Israel's "expansionism"?

THE SECOND "KEY" TO THE SOLUTION of the "impasse in the Holy Land" is to be found, in Mr. Childers' view, in the revision of Israel's boundaries, or to be more exact, in the detachment from it of its southern region, the Negev. How this strange proposal is to be carried into effect, who is to ensure the "inviolate" position of the 15,000 Jewish inhabitants who are to live amidst hundreds of thousands of hostile Arabs to be re-settled there, how their unhindered "relationship to Israel" is to be translated into political and constitutional terms—all this Mr. Childers leaves to the imagination of the friendly reader. His bold planning is not inhibited by any disturbing acquaintance with the realities of Negev settlement. If he knew anything of the difficulties with which trained and experienced Jewish settlers and their instructors have had to battle in that area, he might realise what prospects there are of many thousands of Arab refugees finding in the Negev—placed moreover under so bewildering a condominium—"new and inspiring livelihoods."

There "would be an enormous difference, politically and psychologically," writes Mr. Childers, between demanding that the refugees in Jordan and Gaza move from there into Syria and Iraq and asking that they accept resettlement in the Negev, "an area that was, in fact, part of the territory the Arabs feel was usurped." (It was in fact allocated to Israel in the U.N. Resolution of 1947, a fact generally overlooked in recent propaganda for "a return to 1947"). Anyone slightly familiar with the thinking of the Arab refugees would presumably hold that they would rather be resettled in the water-rich domains of Syria and Iraq than in the dry, if "usurped," semi-deserts of the Negev.

Mr. Childers considers that his Negev plan would redress a main grievance of the Arabs. "The Arabs have one classical interest in this triangle," he writes. "Only across the Negev can the historic land connection between Egypt and the great 'Fertile Crescent' be maintained." But a study of the historical geography of Palestine shows that the "historic" land route between Egypt and the countries of the Fertile Crescent never led across the Negev. As for the grievance, it may well be claimed that the inclusion of the Negev in the domain of Israel, so far from having driven a wedge into the Arab world, had in fact precluded overt hostilities between Egypt and Iraq during their long drawn-out struggle for the control of Jordan and hegemony in the Middle East. It is a struggle which is not yet over. Nor, incidentally, is it of novel pattern. Since time immemorial, the rulers of the Nile and of the Euphrates Valleys have struggled hard for primacy in the area. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar have not

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

changed their geo-political traditions because they both now speak Arabic and bow their heads to the Kaaba.

The reason why the Arab States oppose Israel's control of the Negev is essentially negative. The Negev represents Israel's gateway to the Indian Ocean. Having, by their prohibition of Israel shipping in the Suez Canal closed to her one exit to the Eastern seas, they are bent on denying her also exit through the Gulf of Akaba. To this end, and not in order to open up the Negev for the settlement of Arab refugees—an idea which no responsible Arab leader has ever advocated—the Arabs want to drive Israel out of the Negev. It is part of their design to ruin Israel by economic pressure. Israel is not rich in natural resources. It has no vast supplies of oil which produce huge incomes without any effort on the part of their owners. The Negev is the only area in which Israel can still conduct large-scale agricultural and industrial planning and from which it can develop trade with Asia and Africa. In the light of all this, the Arab demand for its detachment from Israel will appear not as a "key" to the gate of peace, but as part of the overall campaign for Israel's destruction which the Arab States pursue from behind the protective screen of the Armistice.

As to the Arab refugee problem and its origins. It was "facile and foolish," Mr. Childers asserts, "to hold that the Arab governments are using the refugees as a political weapon." It had been frequently alleged that not only had they caused the Arab exodus by their attack upon Israel, but that they had actually "exhorted Arab villagers and townsfolk to move aside until the Jews had been exterminated from the land," and that these "exhortations, during the Arab invasion of the new Israeli State, were the prime cause of the exodus." The facts on record, he states, were "quite different," the Arab exodus having begun "well before the surrounding Arab States invaded new Israel on May 15th, 1948."

There is abundant evidence to show that the exhortations of the Arab States—there were in fact not "exhortations," but orders accompanied by threats against those failing to obey them—were the foremost cause of the Arab mass exodus. These orders were given not "during the Arab invasion of the new Israeli State," but well before the Arab States invaded Israel on May 15th, 1948. They were, in fact, an essential part of the preparations for that invasion. "As the time for the British withdrawal drew nearer," wrote *Al Huda*, a Lebanese newspaper published in the U.S., on June 6th, 1951,

> the zeal of the Arab League was redoubled. Meetings and conferences took place almost daily and burning calls and appeals were issued. Brotherly advice was given to the Arabs of Palestine, urging them to leave their land, homes, and property and go to stay temporarily in neighbouring, brotherly States, lest the guns of the invading Arab armies mow them down. The Palestinian Arabs had no choice but to obey the "advice" of the League and to believe what Azzam Pasha and other responsible men in the League told them—that their withdrawal from their lands and their country was only temporary and would end in a few days with the successful termination of the Arab "punishment" action against Israel.

This is confirmed by statements made at the time by Msgr. George Hakim, the Arab Greek-Catholic Archbishop of Galilee and others close to the scene of events, by Arab authors such as Nimr Al-Hawari (*The Secret Behind the Disaster*) and Hashim As-Saba (*Memories of a Persecuted Journalist*), and by a British eye-witness report published in *The Economist* of October 2nd, 1948. The latter states that the most potent factor which influenced the Arabs to leave the country

> were the announcements made over the air by the Arab Higher Executive, urging all Arabs in Haifa to quit. The reason given was that upon the final withdrawal of the British, the combined armies of the Arab States would invade Palestine and "drive the Jews into the sea," and it was clearly intimated that those Arabs who remained in Haifa and accepted Jewish protection would be regarded as renegades.

So far from the Jews being responsible for the flight of the Arabs, as suggested in Mr. Childers' presentation of the story, the British eye-witness of the Arab exodus from Haifa, writing shortly after the event, reports:

> During subsequent days the Jewish authorities, who were now in complete control of Haifa, urged all Arabs to remain in Haifa and guaranteed them protection and security.

In the same way a high-ranking British police officer in Haifa reported on April 26th, 1948:

> Every effort is being made by the Jews to persuade the Arab population to stay and carry on with their normal lives, to get their shops and businesses open, and to be assured that their lives and interests will be safe.

It is utterly misleading to suggest that the essential cause of the Arab exodus was the destruction of the Arab village of Deir Yassin by a group of Jewish irregulars acting throughout in defiance of the Jewish National authorities. The fact that nearly 200,000 Arabs remained in Israel, while not a single Jew or Jewish settlement survived in the regions occupied by the several Arab military forces, speaks for itself.

The charge that the Arab States do not want the refugee problem to be solved and are using it cynically for political ends, is not "facile and foolish." It is supported by every official Arab utterance from the early days of the discussion to the debates in the recent General Assembly of the U.N. Here again, let an eye-witness speak: "It is perfectly clear," said Mr. Galloway, a former representative of U.N.R.W.A. in Jordan, to an American study group in Amman in 1952,

> that the Arab nations do not want to solve the Arab refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront against the United

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Nations, and a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders don't give a damn whether the refugees live or die....

Anyone familiar with the position of the refugees knows full well that they are not able to speak their minds freely. In a recent dispatch of the Beirut correspondent of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (September 19th, 1958) on conversations with Palestine refugees, he states:

> The have-nots among the Palestinians—the inhabitants of the camps—are often aware ... of the fact that they are being exploited by the ruling upper classes of their people as a political pressure device.... U.N.R.W.A. reports that the refugees' readiness to learn a trade or accept U.N. help in making themselves economically independent and settling down in one of the host countries is infinitely greater to-day than it was only a few years ago.

In the light of this it is rather amazing to read the statement, made by Mr. Childers "without hesitation," that even if the Arab host countries were to accept the re-settlement of the refugees, the latter would have to be moved *"at gun-point"* (his italics).

The basic attitude of the Arab leaders to the refugee problem is inspired not by humanitarian but by political motives. This was stated frankly by a former Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mohammed Salah ed Din in *Al Misri* of October 11th, 1949: "Let it be known and appreciated," he wrote,

> that in demanding the restoration of the refugees to Palestine, the Arabs intend that they return as masters of the homeland and not as slaves. More explicitly: they intend to annihilate the State of Israel.

THE IMPASSE IN THE HOLY LAND *cannot* be solved by the simple device of accepting the three major demands of the Arab States—the limitation of Jewish immigration, the reduction of Israel's area by the detachment of the Negev, and the repatriation of the Arab refugees. It can be overcome only by both sides meeting with the sincere intention of reaching a freely agreed and mutually acceptable settlement. For the last ten years, Israel has made one proposal after another for such a meeting within or without the framework of the U.N., with or without the participation of third parties, but assuredly without any preliminary conditions or commitments. So far the Arab response has been consistently negative.

LEO KOHN

Hebrew University
Jerusalem

Ambush

WHY should the readers of ENCOUNTER be presented with Dr. Leavis's arguments only as they have been hashed up by Mr. Grigson? Don't the editors of ENCOUNTER believe that a man is entitled to speak for himself in the pages of their magazine, before he and his views are subjected to ridicule and abuse? In the name of the most elementary kind of fair play, Mr. Grigson's piece in your April issue cannot be allowed to pass without protest. There is all the difference in the world between an encounter and an ambush.

DAN JACOBSON

London, N.W.11

Trotsky and Wolfe

BERTRAM D. WOLFE's review of *Trotsky's Diary in Exile* [March, 1959] gives evidence of his profound disturbance at what he found there. Instead of inspired and incisive philosophy the book reveals only inept dogmatic attempts at political prediction. Trotsky's picture of himself, served up with inadvertent relish in the reviewer's lines, is more than melancholy—it is terrifying.

The picture of a man of stature thrusting out at life and at the future with blunted weapons rings true enough. What is more difficult to absorb cheerfully is Mr. Wolfe's implicit feeling that some sort of recantation might somehow have rendered Trotsky more acceptable to his readers. "Nowhere," says the reviewer, "is there any new-found wisdom, any trace of humility or even a momentary doubt. Every line scornful, omniscient, cocksure, full of self-importance and certitude." This is followed by the remark that Trotsky's judgments did not merit such confidence. Undoubtedly history has voted against the Trotsky of the 'thirties, and the crystal ball of the exile years did not respond accurately to the customary incantations. This was his fate. Yet does Mr. Wolfe really think that Trotsky would be more attractive to us, or that he would have enhanced his reputation if, solitary and hunted, he had thrown off bits and pieces of his Communistic revolutionary soul to propitiate his avowed enemies? If Trotsky ever felt such a temptation, and it is unlikely, the seductive power must have been swiftly dissolved in anticipation of laughter in the future, in the thought of a reviewer like Mr. Wolfe gleefully noting in the margin the word "hypocrite." Having sacrificed his career for the preservation of the revolutionary ideal in Russia Trotsky was not likely to sacrifice his soul to its enemies outside Russia. Is it possible that Mr. Wolfe opened the book hoping fervently that he was to find, at last, a main actor in the Russian Revolution grovelling in horror before his revolutionary past? If so he picked the wrong man! One does not really feel, however, that Mr. Wolfe hates the makers of the Russian Revolution that much. Yet having been given satisfying, concrete evidence of Trotsky's fallibility in his later years one cannot help wishing that surrender had not been subtly demanded of him as well. A toothless lion roaring off-key in the desert is due his dignity. Let him have it for what he was, and is.

The welcome given to the admission by Trotsky in complicity in the arrangements for the Tsar's death is understandable. On the other hand the relentless logic that bids great men dry their personal tears before the memory of their own past crimes is disturbing. Trotsky did suffer, and soli-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tary suffering ought not to be made either relative or expiatory. Surely it is not proper that posthumously he should suffer the indignity of unsolicited pity being proffered and withdrawn capriciously. A moral view of Trotsky is quite in order if it is a total moral view. This ordering of historical events in uneasy juxtaposition for effect, however, seems to me to be unworthy.

Does one detect, at the base of this review, a feeling that the Russian Revolution was not a great human drama and that its leaders were lesser men? It is a strange thought to entertain about a biographer of the men of 1917.

D. M. SCHURMAN

Royal Military College
Kingston, Ontario

Beyond Beethoven and Bartok

WITH Mr. Virgil Thomson's main contention [ENCOUNTER, January], namely that "the tradition of constant change must be thrown overboard and freshness found through other preoccupations" no sensible musician is likely to disagree. We have, or ought to have got beyond the stage of believing that technical innovations in themselves are necessarily evidence of "progress," or that "modernism" is a matter of vocabulary rather than a way of thinking. Mr. Thomson is also on safe ground when he asserts that there is no reason to suppose that *sérialisme intégral* or, for that matter, any other contemporary compositional technique, is necessarily, or even probably, the "music of the future": only the future can supply the answer to that claim.

Where I find it harder to agree with him is when he suggests that music has now reached an *impasse* from which no escape is possible, and that all composers of this generation can hope to do is to "codify" what has been accomplished up to now. This seems to me an unnecessarily pessimistic, not to say timid attitude to adopt—although it is true that Mr. Thomson does leave one loop-hole open for escape from his dilemma when he hints at the possibility of "seeking innovation through expressivity" instead of, as hitherto, the other way about.

Here, I would point out, he seems to be expressing a view not dissimilar from that of Dr. Theodor Adorno who, in a closely argued article entitled "Modern Music is Growing Old," published in *Der Monat* and *Preuves* some three years ago and (in an English translation) in *The Score* of December 1956, makes very much the same point. The time has come, in fact, when composers must cease to juggle with mere intellectual abstractions—the "pure material" of music, as the "advanced" school would call it, and try to express something closer to the realities of the age in which we live. But this, so far, is what no one has dared to do. For, as Dr. Adorno very pertinently remarks, "What works to-day could be considered authentic unless they reflect intense fear? And who, short of being a Schoenberg or a Picasso, feels genuinely strong enough to undertake such works?..." Nevertheless, he concludes, "in the world we live in there are always things for which art is the only remedy; there is always a contradiction between *what is* and *what is true*, between arrangements for living and humanity. Only he who has the courage to recognise that the art which the mind demands (and society, too, in the last resort) must to-day be produced in a solitude from which there is no escape will find again, through his work as an artist, the strength to resist these tendencies. And this task must be performed spontaneously, and no illusions must be entertained as to its being either *necessary* or *legitimate*; then, perhaps, something better will be achieved than a mere mirror held up to isolation and disorder."

I have quoted this passage as it seems to me to be relevant to the discussion, if only in so far as it refutes the suggestion that music has now reached the end of its tether and is incapable of further expansion, and that since the Creator has had his day, it is now only the Distributor who matters. Why is Mr. Thomson so certain there will never be "another Beethoven, nor a Bach, nor a Mozart nor even a Debussy"? We have already had a Bartok and a Stravinsky in the last half century, and there seems to be no valid reason for supposing that the art of music will have perished entirely before the year 2000.

ROLLO H. MYERS

The Coach House
Bramley
Surrey

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTHORS

WHEN the new Street Offences Bill was being drafted for parliamentary passage, we asked **Wayland Young** to "take a few last walks in the city" and report on the prostitute in London (before the curtain came down). Mr. Young is the author of three novels, a history of Italian Socialism, a study of the Montesi Case, and (together with his wife, the poetess Elizabeth Young) a book on *Old London Churches* (Faber, 1956). He was born, as he writes, "in comfortable circumstances thirty-five years ago; educated at a public school and Cambridge; happily married; five children...." He has contributed frequently to these pages, and among his ENCOUNTER articles are "Return to Wigan Pier" (June 1956), "Mutation Morality" (February 1957), "The Hydrogen Bomb" (May 1957), "The Montesi Affair" (Sept. 1957), "An Abolitionist's Position" (Nov. 1958).

Hilary Corke has been a university lecturer in Mediaeval English in Cairo and Edinburgh. Preferred the former. Now a free-lance writer; publishes poems, reviews and articles.

Simon Raven *writes*: "Born in London in 1927, schooled at Charterhouse, was called up in 1946 and later commissioned in India. Having been demobilised he went up to King's College, Cambridge, where he took a moderate degree in Classics and was allowed to remain after graduation in order to attempt a thesis in competition for a prize Fellowship. But the thesis drooped and so did the college authorities; and Raven, opting for a complete change of ambience, rejoined the Army as a regular in 1953. He saw service in Germany and for a short time commanded a company in Kenya; but trouble set in when he was appointed Training Officer at his Regimental Depot. Horses were slow on the many adjacent race courses; duns gathered at the barrack gate: a hasty resignation followed, and Raven and the attendant duns departed for Grub Street.... He now writes regularly for the *Spectator* and has published one novel, *The Feathers of Death*, which was quite amiably received by his brother critics this January. A second novel, *Brother Cain*, is scheduled to appear in the autumn, and a fuller study of the military establishment will appear in a book shortly to be brought out by Anthony Blond...."

Sidney Hook is professor of philosophy at New York University. He is the author of *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx, From Hegel to Marx*, a study of *John Dewey, The Hero in History*, and *Heresy Yes, Conspiracy No*. His recent journey through Asia was a "quest for philosophers" to help in the preparation of a World Philosophical Congress.

Constantine FitzGibbon is the author of *The Shirt of Nessus*, an historical account of the 20th of July plot against Hitler. He has also published new translations of Rilke and La Rochefoucauld.... **Anthony Powell's** latest novel is *At Lady Molly's* (Heinemann, 1957). . . . **Frank Kermode** is the author of *The Romantic Image* and is John Edward Taylor Professor of English Literature at Manchester University.... **Manya Harari** is (together with Max Hayward) the translator into English of Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. . . . **Kenneth Younger,** M.P., has recently announced his resignation (i.e. he does not choose to run in the next election). C. M. Woodhouse does choose to run, and he will be succeeded by Mr. Younger as director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.... **J. A. Lukacs** teaches in America and has just completed an edition of the letters exchanged by De Tocqueville and Gobineau.... **Frank Howes** and **Peter Heyworth** are, respectively, the music critics of *The Times* and *The Observer*.... **Max Hartwell** is a Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, and University Reader in Economic and Social History.

WE regret that in our last issue the publishers of *Conrad the Novelist* (reviewed by David Daiches) were wrongly given as Cambridge University Press. The publishers are in fact the Harvard University Press, and Mr. Albert Guerard's book is distributed in England by the Oxford University Press.

The editorial and business offices of ENCOUNTER are at 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1. A stamped addressed envelope (English stamp) or international reply coupons should accompany MSS, otherwise they cannot be returned. For subscription details please see page 1.

ENCOUNTER is published by Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd., 7 John Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.1, for THE CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM, 104 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris 8, France. PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Denis de Rougemont. SECRETARY-GENERAL: Nicolas Nabokov.

The views expressed in the pages of ENCOUNTER *are to be attributed to the writers, not to the sponsors*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED